TWELVE PORTRAITS OF AMERICAN WRITERS

N15-42

TWELVE PORTRAITS

OF

AMERICAN WRITERS

SKETCHED

BY

SOFIA GIUSSANI

PALERMO
VIRZÌ'S PRINTING-HOUSE

1908

All rights reserved.

810.9
G447t

INDEX

Preface . . . . . *page* VII

I. Benjamin Franklin . . . . . » 1
II. Alexander Hamilton . . . . . » 18
III. Noah Webster . . . . . » 26
IV. Washington Irving . . . . . » 43
V. Thomas Paine . . . . . » 54
VI. Thomas Jefferson . . . . . » 67
VII. Philip Freneau . . . . . » 76
VIII. Charles Brockden Brown . . . . . » 94
IX. James Fenimore Cooper . . . . . » 108
X. William Cullen Bryant . . . . . » 123
XI. George Bancroft . . . . . » 143
XII. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow . . . . . » 153

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2016

https://archive.org/details/twelveportraitso00gius

PREFACE.

A few years ago I had planned to collect in a volume some critical views on the most celebrated English writers, including also the leading American authors, so that the work might offer an essay on general English Literature; but after a long time spent and much trouble taken, I had to abandon the very idea of completing such a work, for the great difficulty to have the necessary material supplied for the large extent of that scope, was every now and then experienced. But although I had to surrender before that big obstacle, I did not intend to destroy what I had gathered; therefore upon a mature reflection, I concluded I could somewhat succeed by confining my plan within narrower limits. And, as properly said English ahthors have been so much spoken of by very efficient critics, I thought I had better pay my attention to some of the standard writers of the other side of the Atlantic.

The reader is now presented hereby with my first essay which contains only « Twelve Portraits of American Writers, » each of them having been studied and reported of, under three stand points, viz., as a man, as a patriot and as an author. Therefore a biographical sketch is accompanied or followed

in every instance by a list of the Author's works, with their respective date of publication, and occasionally, their different editions, so that the reader may constantly have a large harvest for consultation.

I shall always be grateful to all those kind friends who will let me know of any lack or mistake I may have made in this first edition, which is an effort of good will rather than a complete study. The scarce number of documents I have been able to consult and the difficulty to come across them, are the reasons which explain why I could not do more if not better.

Palermo, September 1908.

S. G.

I.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

Benjamin Franklin, whose very name since it was consecrated by the poet Chaucer, is freshly suggestive of freedom, was born in Boston, January 17, 1706. He was the youngest son of the youngest son for five generations, the fifteenth child of his father out of a family of seventeen, fourteen of whom were born in America, and of these ten were the children of his mother, the second wife, and all grew up to years of maturity and were married. His father was a nonconformist, emigrant from England, who went to Boston about 1685, a man of strength and prudence of character; descended from a family which, though it could claim no other nobility than in nature's heraldry of honest labor, had shown considerable persistency in that; holding on to a small freehold estate of thirty acres in Northamptonshire for a period of three hundred years, the eldest son steadily pursuing the business of a smith. Franklin was not averse to these claims of antiquity. In his autobiography he mentions having examined the registers at Ecton, and « found an account of the family marriages and burials from the year 1555 only. » An uncle who died four years before his illustrious nephew was born, heralded the raising instincts of the race by his struggles out of the smithery

into a legal education, and a position of considerable influence in the county. There was also some taste for literature making its appearance from another uncle Benjamin, our Franklin's godfather, who lived to an old age in Boston, and left behind him, in 1728, two quarto volumes of manuscript poems, occasional family verses, acrostics, and the like. One of these compositions, sent to the young Benjamin at the age of seven, on some demonstration of precocity, turned out to be prophetic.

Franklin's mother represented a literary name of the old province of Massachusetts. She was the daughter of Peter Folger, of whose little poetical volume « A Looking Glass for the Times » asserting liberty of conscience, we will say in another portrait.

The early incidents of Franklin's life are happily familiar, through the charming pages of the autobiography, to every American reader. There is not an intelligent school-boy, who does not know the story of his escape from the noisome and gloomy soap and candle manufactory of his father, into the printing office of his brother; his commencement of the literary life, when, like the young Oliver Goldsmith, he wrote ballads for the streets on the light-house tragedy and Blackbeard the pirate, and desisted from this unprofitable course of poetry when his father told him that « verse makers were generally beggars », his borrowing books and sitting up in the night to read them; buying others for himself, and finding opportunity to study them by the savings of time and money in his printing-office dinner of a slice of bread and a glass of water; his stealthily slipping his articles under the door of his newspaper office the New England Courant, at night; his endurance of various slights and humilities till nature and intellect grew too strong in him for his brother's tyranny, when he broke the connexion of his apprenticeship and betook himself to Philadelphia, where he ate that memorable « puffy » roll in the streets, observed as he went along by Miss Read, his future wife, his first sleep in the city in the Quaker meeting; his printing house work and education;

his singular association with Governor Keit, and the notice which he received from Burnet, the Governor of New York, as he journeyed along, marking thus early his career and influence with title personages, which carried him to the thrones of kings themselves.

That « odd volume of the Spectator, » too, which directed his youthful tastes, how often do we meet with his kind influences in American literature. It turns up again and again in the pages of Freneau Dennie, Paulding, Irving; and we have had another good look at it through the lorgnette of master Ik Marvel.

Franklin left Boston at seventeen in 1723; visited England the following year, worked at his trade, and wrote a treatise of infidel Metaphysics, and returned to Philadelphia in 1726. The plan for the conduct of life which he wrote on this voyage homewards, has been lost. Its scope may be readily gathered from his writings. Industry, we may be sure, formed a prominent feature in it, and economy of happiness the next by which a man should live on as good terms as possible with himself and his neighbours. In his early life, Franklin had exposed himself to some danger by his habit of criticism. More than one passage of his writings warns the reader against this tendency. Though he never appears to have wanted firmness on proper occasions, he settled down upon the resolution to speak ill of no one whatever, and as much good as possible of everybody. On his return to Philadelphia, he established the club, The Junto, which lasted many years, and was a means not only of improvement but of political influence as his opportunities for exercising it increased. The steps of Franklin's progress were now rapid. He established himself as a printer, purchased the Pennsylvania Gazette, then recently started, and which he had virtually projected in 1729; published the same year a pamphlet, « A Modest Enquiry into the Nature and Necessity of a Paper Currency; » married in 1730; assisted in founding the Philadelphia Library in 1731; the next year published his Almanac;

was chosen in 1736 clerk of the General Assembly; became deputy Postmaster at Philadelphia in 1737; was all this while a printer, and publishing the newspaper, not dividing the duties of his printing office with a partner until 1748; in 1741 published « The general Magazine and Historical Chronicle for all the British Plantations in America; » invented the stove, which bears his name, in 1742; proposed the American Philosophical Society in 1748; established the Academy out of which the University of Pennsylvania finally grew, in 1749; in 1752 demonstrated his theory of the identity of lightning with electricity by his famous kite experiment in a field near Philadelphia, on the anticipation of war with France was sent as a delegate to the Congress of Commissioners of the Colonies at Albany in 1754, where he proposed a system of Union which in important points anticipated the present Confederation; opposed taxation by parliament; assisted Braddock's Expedition by his energy; was himself for a short time a military commander on the frontier in 1756; was the next year sent to England by the Assembly, a popular representative against the pretensions of the Proprietaries, when Massachusetts, Maryland, and Georgia also appointed him their agent; took part in the « Historical Review of Pennsylvania, » a trenchant volume on the affairs of the Colony, in 1759; wrote a pamphlet, « The Interest of Great Britain Considered » in the retention of Canada, in 1760; received the degree of Doctor of Laws from the Universities of Edinburgh and Oxford, and returned in America in 1762. Two years after he returned to England as Colonial Agent; pursued his course industriously and courteously for the interests of the old Government, but firmly for the right claimed at home; bore a full examination before Parliament on the relations of America to the Stamp Act, which was published and read with general interest; was confronted by Wedderburn, the Solicitor General for the Crown, as counsel for Hutchinson at the memorable privy council examination of January 1774; returned again to Philadelphia in 1775; signed the Declaration

of Independence in Congress; went Ambassador to France in October of the same year, when he was seventy, and displayed his talents in diplomacy and society; returning after signing the treaty of peace, in 1785, to America, when he was made President of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for three years, was a delegate to the Federal Convention in 1787, and retaining his full powers of mind and constitutional cheerfulness to the last, died April 17, 1790, in his eighty-fourth year.

The famous epitaph which he wrote in his days of youth, at the age of twenty-three, was not placed over his grave in Philadelphia :

THE BODY
OF
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN,
PRINTER
(LIKE THE COVER OF AN OLD BOOK
ITS CONTENTS TORN OUT,
AND STRIPT OF ITS LETTERING AND GILDING)
LIES HERE, FOOD FOR WORMS,
YET THE WORK ITSELF SHALL NOT BE LOST,
FOR IT WILL, AS HE BELIEVED, APPEAR ONCE MORE,
IN A NEW
AND MORE BEAUTIFUL EDITION
CORRECTED AND AMENDED
BY
THE AUTHOR.

This epitaph is not to be considered original, it is supposed to be a remembrance of the other epitaph written by Woodbridge on Cotton.

He directed a simpler inscription in his will : « I wish to be buried by the side of my wife, if it may be, and that

a marble stone, to be made by Chambers, six feet long, four feet wide, plain, with only a small moulding round the upper edge, and this inscription :

BENJAMIN AND DEBORAH FRANKLIN 178 —

be placed over us both. »

One of the most memorable incidents in Franklin's life, was his appearence, in 1774, before the Committee of the Privy Council, on the hearing of the Petition of the Massachussets people, for the recall of Hutchinson and Oliver, whose minatory letters he had been instrumental in publishing, and thereby lighted the torch of Revolution.

Franklin had there to meet the assault of Wedderburn, the Solicitor-General of the Crown, who attacked him with the sharpest wit, and fiercest insolence. Franklin represented his agency in the matter of procuring and forwarding the letter to America, as a public act, dealing with the public correspondence with the public men. Wedderburn inveighed against as a theft, and betrayal of private confidence. « Into what companies, » he exclaimed, « will the fabricator of this iniquity hereafter go with an unembarrassed face, or with any semblance of the honest intrepidity of virtue ? Men will watch him with a jealous eye; they will hide their papers from him, and lock up their escritoires. Having hitherto aspired after fame by his writings, he will henceforth esteem it a libel to be called a man of letters, homo trium literarum; » and, in allusion to Franklin's avowal of his share in the transaction. « I can compare him only to Zanga in Dr. Young's Revenge :

> Know, then, 'twas I,
> I forget the letter — I disposed the picture
> I hated, I despised — and I destroy

I ask my Lord, whether the revengeful temper attributed by poetic fiction only to the bloody-minded African, is not sur-

passed by the coolness and apathy of the wily New Englander. » A distinguished company was present in the Council Chamber; among others Burke, Priestley, and Jeremy Benthan. The last has described Franklin's quiet endurance of the scene: « Alone in the recess, on the left hand of the president, standing, remaining the whole time like a rock, in the same posture, his head resting on his left hand, and in that attitude abiding the pelting of the pitiless storm. » Priestley says that Lord North was the only one of the Council who behaved with decent gravity. To conciliate his fellow Englishmen, Franklin had dressed himself carefully for the occasion in a costly suit of Manchester velvet, and Priestley adds the story of Franklin's triumph : « Silas Deane told me that when they met at Paris to sign the treaty between France and America, he purposely put on that suit. » Verily Franklin had his revenge in the swift pursuing decrees of fate. An epigrammatist of the time declared the end :

> Sarcastic sawney, full of spite and hate
> On modest Franklin poured his venal prate;
> The calm philosopher without reply
> Withdrew — and gave his country liberty.

And the retributive pen of the historian has pointed to the final reputation of the two actors in the scene — the usurping tyrant of the hour and the generous benefactor of the age. « Franklin and Wedderburn parted; the one to spread the celestial fire of freedom among men; to make his name a cherished household word in every nation of Europe; and in the beautiful language of Washington, ' to be venerated for benevolence, to be admired for talents, to be esteemed for patriotism, to be beloved for his philantropy : ' the other, childless though twice wedded, unbeloved, wrangling with the patron who had impeached his veracity, busy only in ' getting everything he could ' in the way of titles and riches, as the wages of corruption. Franklin, when he died had nations for his mourners, and the great and the good throughout the

world as his eulogists; when Wedderburn died there was no man to mourn; no senate spoke his praise; no poet embalmed his memory; and his king, hearing that he was certainly dead said only: « then he has not left a greater knave behind him in my dominions.»

« The finest study of Franklin is in his Autobiography: simple in style, it is tinged by the peculiar habit of the author's mind and shows his humor of character in perfection. Notice, for instance, the lurking tone of admiration of the crafty old sophister, in the account of the conversation of old Bradford with Keimer, the printer, on Franklin's first introduction; or the adroitness with which when he is about being caught in his own web, when he is recommending modesty in proposing critical opinions, and falls himself to amending a couplet of Pope, he ventures his emendation, and recovers his position by adding « This however, I should submit to better judgements.»

There is a simplicity in this book which charms us in the same way with the humorous touches of nature in the Vicar of Wakefield. Franklin's Boston brother in the printing-office: — irascible, jealous, and mortified on the return of the successful adventurer, who in playing off his prosperity before the workmen, in an artist's picture of life drawn in a few conclusive touches. So, too, is Keimer as happily hit off as any personage in Gil Blas, particularly in that incident at the break-up of Franklin's system of vegetable diet, which he had adopted: he invites his journeymen and two women friends to dine with him, providing a roast pig for the occasion, which being prematurely served up, is devoured by the enthusiast before the company arrives; in that effective sketch, in a paragraph of the Philadelphia City Croaker, whose ghost still walks every city in the world mocking prosperity of every degree — « a person of note, an elderly man, with a wise look and a very grave manner of speaking.» The autobiography was written in several portions.

It was first commenced at Twyford, the country resi-

dence of the good bishop of St. Asaph, in 1771, and addressed to his son the Governor of New Jersey, and continued at intervals, till the revolutionary war occupied the writer's time exclusively. It was again, at the solicitation of his friend James and Vaughan resumed at Passy in 1784, and afterwards continued in America. The history of the several editions of this work is curious. It was first as was the case with Jefferson's « Notes on Virginia » published in French translated from the Author's manuscript. This version was retranslated into English and published for the first time in that language in London 1793. Oddly enough in another French edition, which appeared in Paris in 1798, the autobiography was again translated into French, from the English version of the foreign language. The work, as Franklin wrote it, in his native tongue, was first given to the world in the collection of his writings, by his grandson William Temple Franklin, in 1817. The translation from the French is still in circulation in America, nowithstanding the publication of Franklin's original; though the authoritative edition of Sparks has of late set an example which will drive all other copies than the genuine one from the market. (To the old American editions a continuation was added by Dr. Henry Stuber. He was of German parentage, born in Philadelphia about 1770).

The Autobiography continued from time to time—the latter portions of it where written as late as the year 1788 — concluded with Franklin's arrival in England as Agent of the Assembly, against the Proprietaries in 1757. The 33 years of his life then unexpired were to be filled with momentous interests; his participation in which as the manager and negotiator of the infant State throws into the shade the literature, which continued, however, to employ him to the end. It was during his last sojourn at Paris amidst the cares of State, that he composed those literary essays of such general fame — the Ephemere, Petition of the Cats, the Whistle and the Dialogue with the Gout, written for the amusement of the brilliant friends, including Madame Helvetius and Ma-

dame Brillon, who enlivened his age and cares at Passy and Auteuil.

While Franklin was printer in London, he gave vent to his philosophical views by printing a pamphlet entitled A Dissertation on Liberty and Necessity, Pleasure and Pain, in a letter to a Friend. This was in 1725. Though he expressed a dislike of the publication, he recurs to it with some paternal affection both in the autobiography and in his correspondence. The essay helonged to the school of Mandeville in obliterating the distinction between virtue and vice, and readily introduced the young printer, who was not nineteen years of age at that time, to that arch-skeptic the author of « The Fable of the Bees » who held an entertaining Club in Cheapside. The pamphlet was started in the busy brain of the compositor by his setting up Wallaston's « Religion of Nature » to which it was intended as a reply. Its argument was a sublimated optimist arguing everything in the world to be right from the attributes of the Deity of Wisdom, Goodnes and Power. The motto was from Dreyden:

> Whatever is, is right. But purblind man
> Sees but a part o' the chain, the nearest links;
> His eyes not carrying to that equal beam,
> That poises all above.

One hundred eopies only of the works were printed; a few were given to friends; the author became dissatisfied with the production, and burnt the remainder, excepting a copy filled with manuscript notes, by his acquaintances at the time, a surgeon named Lyons, who wrote on the « Infallibility of Human Judgement.» This tract has not been printed in any edition of Franklin's works. When Mr. Sparks published his edition in 1840, it was thought to be entirely lost. That editor expressed his belief that « no copy of this tract is now known to be in existence.» Sir James Mackintosh searched for it in vain. Since that time a copy has been found in England. James Crossley communicated the fact to the antiquarian pu-

blication NOTES AND QUERIES. It is a pamphlet of sixteem octavo pages. It is addressed to Mr. J. R. (JAMES RALPH), and commences with the comprehensive declaration: « I have here, according to your request, given you my present thoughts on the general state of things in the universe; » and concluded with the undeniable assertion, « Truth will be truth, though it sometimes proves mortifying and distasteful.»

POOR RICHARD'S ALMANAC was commenced by Franklin in 1733, and continued for twenty—six years, to 1758. It was put forward as the production of Richard Saunders, Philomath printed and sold by B. Franklin. Its quaint humor and home spun moralities made its successive issues great favorites with the people, wo to their credit, have always shown an avidity for popular publications of humor and sagacity, from Cotton Mather's grim moralities, down to the felicitous Mr. Partington, who gets the smallest modicum of wisdom out of the greatest amount of uonsense. About ten thousand copies were sold of it annually, a great nuuber for the times. As in the case of most very popular works, the early editions were literally consumed by its ardent admirers. One of the old copies is now considered a greas rarity; and a complete set was found by Mr. Sparks to be unattainable. Most of the numbers were however put together after nearly four years' research among public libraries and private collections, by John Dogget, Jr., who in 1849 commenced the republication of « Poor Richard.»

Its greatest popularity was achieved when a number of Poor Bichard's aphorisms were collected and prefixed as an harangue to the people, *The way to Wenlth,* to the almanac for 1758.

In this concentrated form Poor Richard passed into general cireulation as a popular tract in newspapers and broadsheets. Franklin himself attributes the growing plenty of money in Philadelphia after its appearance, to the practice of its economical precepts. Three translations have been made of it in French, where it passed as « La Science du Bonhomme

Richard.» It was printed in modern Greek at Dito's press in Paris in 1823.

Poor Richard's matter consists of Mr. Saunder's facetious annual introductions; a bit of homely poetry for the mouth; with the interspace of the calendar, left after the important weather prophecies sprinkled down the page, filled with sentencious maxims. Some of these are coarse and homely for the digestion of ploughmen; others show the nicer edge of Franklin's wit and experience. Rhyme lends its aid to reason; and practical morality has work to do which renders her not very dainty in the use of words. Temperance and independence have sturdy advocates in Poor Richard. « It is hard » says he, « for an empty sack to stay uprigbt » — « Drink water, put the money in your pocket, and leave the dry belly ache in the punch-bowl » — « If you would be revenged of your enemy, govern yourself.»

« If you ride a horse sit close and tight,
If you ride a man, sit easy and light. »

« If you would not be forgotten as soon as you are dead and rotten, either write things worthy reading, or do things worth the writing.» — « Fish and visiters smell in three days.» — « As we must account for every idle word, so we must for every idle silence ».

The poetry is in a few more lines than the maxims, generally with a home thrust at vanity or vice.

That all for Adam first begun,
Since none but Whiston doubts
And that his son, and his son's son
Were ploughmen, clowns, and louts;
Here lies the only difference now,
Some shot off late, some soon;
Your sires i' th' morning left the plough
And ours in the afternoon.

And sometimes a little playful elegance :

My love and I for kisses play'd
She would keep stakes, I was content,
But when I won, she would be paid,
This made me ask her what she meant :
Quoth she, since you are in this wrangling vein
Here, take your kisses, give me mine again.

When Paul Jones, in Paris, in 1778 was making application to the French Government for a military vessel to pursue his career at sea, wearied out with the delay of the officials and the neglect of his letters from the sea ports, he happened to take up an old number of Franklin's Almanac, and alighted on this sentence of Poor Richard : « If you would have your business done, go ; if not, send.» He took the advice proceeded himself to the capital, and pushed his application so successfully, that in gratitude to the oracle he obtained permission to call the ship granted to him the « Bon Homme Richard.» Its fortunes soon made the French translation of the name as familiar to American ears as the original Poor Richard.

Franklin's voluminous correspondence would alone have given him highly literary reputation as a letter writer. His essential philantropy, good humor, wit and ready resources, are everywhere apparent in this. It is the best part of conversation, vital for posterity ; and we may readily imagine from it how Franklin talked, as with his fine tact he always offers something inspiring, useful, and entertàining to his friends. But it is to the perspicuity, method, and ease of Franklin's philosophical writings that his solid reputation will remain greatly indebted. These qualities cannot be better described than in the words of Sir Humphrey Davy, the generous encomiast uf his scientific brethren, who himself practised every grace which he attributed to others :

« A singular felicity of induction guided all his researches, and by very small means he established very grand

truths. The style and manner of his publication on electricity, are almost as worthy of admiration as the doctrine it contains. He has endeavored to remove all mystery and obscurity from the subject. He has written equally for the uninitiated and for the philosopher; and he has rendered his details amusing and perspicuous, elegant as well as simple; science appears in its language, in a dress wonderfully decorous, best adapted to display her native loveliness. He has in no instance exhibited that false dignity, by which philosophy is kept aloof from common applications; and he has sought rather to make her a useful inmate and servant in the common habitation of man, than to preserve her merily as an object of admiration in temples and palaces. »

The uniform industry of Franklin was immense; and though writing was but an incidental pursuit to one who was not an author by profession, and derived no revenue from his pen, the aggregate of his distinct literary compositions outdistances the labors of many who have worked directly for reputation and the booksellers. As enumerated by Mr. Sparks the list of his writings, separate books, articles or distinct papers, independently of his huge correspondence, amounts to three hundred and four îtems, thickly sown along his busy years — and he was always busy — from 1726 to 1790. They exhaust every method of doing good practically, which fell within the range of his powers or experience. They are upon topics of individual and social improvements, of the useful arts, which adorn and ameliorate daily life, of the science which enlarges the powers of the mind and increases the comfort of the body, of political wisdom, extending from the direction of a village to the control and prosperity of the State. In every form of purely human endeavor, the genius of Franklin is paramount. There were principles in philosophy and religion beyond his ken, fields of speculation which his telescope never traversed, metaphysic spaces of the soul to the electric powers of which his lightning rods were no conductors. In the parcel allotment of duties in this

world, his path lay in the region of the practical. In the words of our great Sire to the Archangel, he might have professed

> To know that which before us lies in daily life
> Is the prime wisdom.

There was seldom a fault; cool, wary, political, never betraying himself, never betraying the State; in the language of his American historian, a writer himself skilled in affairs: « Franklin was the greatest diplomatist of the eighteenth century. He never spoke a word too soon, he never spoke a word too late, he never spoke a word too much; he never failed to speak the right word at the right reason. »

We have alluded to Franklin's philosophy as indicative of the religious powers. Here it may be said that he rather lived by them than in them. He appreciated the devout and transcendent labors of such men as Jonathan Edwards in laying the foundations, and could empty his pockets at the heart-stirring appeals of Whitefield. His friendships, in England and America, were with bishops and divines. The bishop of St. Asaph, of Sodor and Man, no less than the Methodist Whitefield, were his friends; and he could cast an eye backwards with affection and reverence, from the glittering salons of Paris, to the dark shades of Puritan ancestors. There was a sound vein of piety in his composition, which bore its fruits; nor had French levity or companionship with the encyclopaedists, blunted his religious education. His warning hand, raised to Paine on the eve of his infidel publication, deserves to be remembered, with his appeal to the obligations of that arch-corrupter himself to religion: « Perhaps you are indebted to her originally, that is to your religious education, for the habits of virtue upon which you now justly value yourself. You might easily display your excellent talents of reasoning upon a less hazardous subject, and thereby obtain a rank with our most distinguished author

for among us it is not necessary, as among the Hottentots, that a youth, to be raised into the company of men, should prove his manhood by beating his mother ». In the same letter he asserts his belief of a particular Providence, which he once so emphatically announced in the Convention of 1787. « I have lived » said he, « a long time, and the longer I live, the more conviucing proofs I see of this truth, that God governs in the affairs of men. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without his notice, is it probable that an Empire can rise without his aid ? »

At the close of his life, President Stiles of Yale, drew from him an expression of his religious opinions, in which he simple announces his belief in the unity and moral government of the Deity, and the paramount « system of morals and religion » of « Jesus of Nazareth, » as « the best the world ever saw, or is likely to see; » but his interpretation of what the latter was, would probably have differed much from that of Dr. Stiles.

One of his very last acts, on his death bed, was to recite to his faithful attendant, Mrs. Hewson, the daughter of his London landlady, the simple and elevated ver ses of good Dr. Watts.

The compliments to Franklin, the sage, philosopher, politician, would fill a volume. Perhaps the Latin epigraph, written by the philosopher Turgot, has been the most productive ever paid :

Eripuit coelo fulmen sceptrumque tyrannis.

His portrait is frequently graced with similar inscriptions, of which the best is that from Horace, placed by Bishop Shipley in the edition of the Miscellanies of 1779 :

Non sordidus auctor Naturae Verique.

He was equally admired by peasants and kings; Louis XV « the grand monarch, » commanded a return of his thanks

to Mr. Franklin, « for his useful discoveries in electricity; » the court of Louis XVI, its philosophers, wits, and ladies of fashion, hailed him with enthusiasm; Chatham was his eulogist in England, and Washington in America; he had the best men in both hemispheres for his friends and correspondents; towns and counties, and even a state, have been named after him; his portrait and bust are familiar in the United States, as those of Washington; « Every penny stamp » says Robert C. Winthrop, happily, in his address: ARCHIMEDES AND FRANKLIN, « is a monument to Franklin, earned, if not established, by himself, as the fruit of his early labors and his signal success in the organization of our infant post-office. » His writings are read with equal zest, though with different emotion, in childhood and age as the old man goes out of the world repeating to the grandchild at the fireside the apologue of quaint familiar wisdom which he had learned in his primer.

The genius of Franklin is omnipresent in Philadelphia. It points to his Library, his philosophical Society, his University, his Hospital, the Institute.

At Boston, his benevolence, still lives in the provisions of his will, his silver medal for the encouragement of scholarship in the free grammar schools, in gratitude for his own « first instructions in literature, » and in a fund to be loaned to young mechanics. At one time it was thought the influence of Poor Richard had produced a too general thrift and parsimony; but these were not the vices of Franklin's instructions, but the virtues of a young state building up its fortunes by economy and endurance. Now these maxims are simply the correctives of rapidly increasing prodigality; the mottoes and incentives to honorable toil and frugality throughout the land. For Franklin having been born in one part of the country, and found that development in another which would probably have been denied him in his birth-place and having been employed abroad in the service of several States, and afterwards in behalf of them all, is properly the son of the Union and the Nation, — and his life, as his fame, belongs to his country.

II.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

Alexander Hamilton, the soldier, statesman, and jurist, the right arm of Washington in peace and war, vas not a native of the United States, though no name is more thoroughly American in its associations than his in the annals of America. He was born in St. Kitts, one of the West India Islands, January 11, 1757. His grandfather was a gentleman of Ayrshire, in Scotland, whence his father emigrated to St. Kitts, where he became bankrupt as a merchant. He married at that Island a widow of Huguenot descent and thus his son Alexander Hamilton, may have inherited the Scottish strength with the French vivacity of character. He certainly possessed both these qualities in a very eminent degree, and exhibited them at a very early age. When he attained fortune and influence in New York, he earnestly invited his father to join him; but his health not suffering him to leave the southern climate, the son contributed to his support till his death, in 1799. His mother, who died in his childhood, he recellected as his warm nature and her qualities demanded, says his own son and biographer, « with inexpressible fondness.» Upon her death, he was under the care of her relations at St. C'x acquiring a limited West India education with such progress in general reading as his own powers of miud and

the acquaintance of a Presbyterian clergyman directed. At twelve years of age he is in the counting-house of Nicholas Cruger, a New York merchant transacting business in the island, who took the strongest in his prosperity, and by whom his good reception, when he went to America, was greatly promoted. For these good services Hamilton always entertained the warmest remembrances. When upon the death of Cruger, a litigation grew out of his will, Hamilton defended and secured the rights of his family, steadily refusing any compensation; and when upon Hamilton's death, a recompense for his services vas offered to his widow, it was met by tbe production of a paper written by Hamilton in his last hours, enjoining his family never to receive money from any of the name Cruger; so far did he carry his sense of the early kindness shown him.

A letter of that date, 1769, shows the ardent ambition of the boy, and the fire at that early age pent up within him. He writes to a school-fellow at New York: « To confess my weakness, Ned, my ambition is prevalent, so that I contemn the grovelling condition of a clerk, or the like, to which my fortune condemns me, and would willingly risk my life, though not my character, to exalt my station. I am confident, Ned, that my youth excludes me from any hopes of immediate preferment, nor do I desire it; but I mean to prepare the way for futurity. I'm no philosopher, yon see, and may be justly said to build castles in the air; my folly makes me ashamed, and beg you'll conceal it; yet, Neddy, we have seen such schemes successful when the projector is constant. I shall conclude by saying I wish there was a wan. » There was nothing of the indolence of the tropics in that language. « The child was father of the man. » He vas a thorough merchant's clerk, as he was afterwards the financier of the new States even tben struggling into being on the maiu land. A description of a storm among the islands, which he wrote at the age of fifteen, influenced his friends in sending him to New York to pursue his studies. He landed at Boston, October

1772, and passing to New York was introduced to the good society of the place. He studied hard at the school of Francis Barber at Elizabethtown and enjoyed the intimacy of Governor Livingston; practising his pen all the while in such occasional verses as an elegy and a prologue and epilogue for a play acted by British soldiers in the neighborhood. He presented himself to Dr. Witherspoon at Princeton College, with the intention of passing as rapidly through the classes as his powers would permit. This privilege was not allowed by the rules of the institution, and he entered King 's, after the revolution Columbia College, at New York. He exercised his talents as a speaker in a debating clnb of the college; and his ready peu in doggrel rhymes at the expense of the ministerial writers who attacked John Holt's Whig newspaper. His character exhibited itself at this time in his strong devotional feeling.

His first step in public affairs was memorable and, as it is related in his memoirs, would form a worthy scene for the pencil of the artist. A meeting of the people of New York was called in The Fields to consider the questions preparatory to a general congress. It was one of the most important occasions in the city of the early Revolutionary period. Hamilton was then seventeen. His patriotism had just been excited by a visit to Boston, then the school of Revolution, where Trumbull at the same time learnt the lesson of freedom. The story is thus told by his biographer:

« It has been related to have been his habit to walk several hours each day under the shade of some large trees which stood in Balten, now Dey Street, talking to himself in an under tone of voice, apparently engaged in deep thought, a practice which he continued through life. This circumstance attracted the attention of his neighbors, to whom he was known as 'the young West indian,' and led them to engage in conversation with him. One of them remarking the vigour and maturity of his thoughts, urged him to address this meeting, to which all the patriots were looking with the

greatest interest. From this seeming intrusion he at first recoiled; but after listening attentively to the successive speakers, and finding several points untouched, he presented himself to the assembled multitude. The novelty of the attempt, his youthful countenance his slender and diminutive form, awakened curiosity and arrested attention. Overawed by the scene before him, he at first hesitated and faltered; but as he proceeded almost unconsciously to utter his accustomed reflections, his mind warmed with the theme, his energies were recovered; and after a discussion clear, cogent and novel, of the great principles involved in the controversy, he depicted in glowing colors the long continued and long endured oppressions of the mother country; he insisted on the duty of resistence, pointed to the means and certainty of success, and described the waves of rebellion sparkling with fire and washing back on the shores of England the wrecks of her power, her wealth, and her glory. The breathless silence ceased as he closed; and the whispered murmur 'it is a collegian! it is a collegian!' was lost in loud expressions of wonder and applause at the extraordinary eloquence of the young stranger.»

The orator was thus launched on the trouble waters of the times. The writer soon plunged after. One of his first efforts seems to have been a newspaper reply to some Tory argument by the President of his college, the youthful Myles Cooper, and his earliest distinct publication, a pamphlet issued by Rivington, a reply to a government tract of the times in which Dr. Seabury (afterwards the Bishop) had a hand. The pamphlet was entitled « A full Vindication of the Measures of Congress from the Calumnies of their enemies, in answer to a Letter under the signature of a W. Farmer: whereby his *sophistry* is exposed, his *cavils* confuted, his *artifices* detected, and his *wit* ridiculed in a General Address to the Inhabitants of America, and a particular Address to the Province of New York. Veritas magna est et prevalebit. »

The argument of this piece of Hamilton 's is direct, the language nervous. Two brief sentences are already in this early effort Hamiltonian tests of the future statesman. Addressing the farmers he intimates that affects no class partialities for them as such, and adds: « I despite all false pretensions and mean arts. » A few sentences further on « Give me the steady uniform, unshaken security of constitutional freedom. » A second pamphlet followed February 1775, from his pen, of noticeable vigour.

President Cooper thought Mr. Jaw must have written it, for Hamilton was quite too young for such a production.

There was a third character in which he was to be known to his countrymen—the soldier. While still a collegian he was engaged with some of the youth of the city in military exercises in the churchyard of St. George 's Chapel. They called their company the « Hearts of Oak. » It was sufficiently organized to be detailed by the revolutionary committee to the work of removing the cannon from the Battery. A boat from the « Asia » man-of-war was fired upon, and several citizens killed by the return broadside from the ship. Hamilton, undisturbed by a fallen comrade, accomplished his work. A convention of the towns-people ensued, which Dr. Cooper from the college, and for a while Toryism and literature were at a discount.

We have now seen Hamilton fully embarked on his great American career, and must pass rapidly over the incidents of his manhood, barely alluding to his early engagement in the camp with Washingtou, at the age of twenty, in 1777: his military life, by the side of his great leader, fron Trenton to Yorktown, in which his bravery and capacity were always distinguished and the services of his pen in the army correspondence. Two incidents of the war may be mentioned, for the light which they throw upon his character - his momentary difficulty with General Washington, showing his high sense of honour and the spur of his southern birth, and his pathetic considerate conduct on the capture of Major André, to whom,

while his judgment acquiesced in his rigorous fate, his tenderness was unbounded. There is no finer written pathos io our history than Hamilton 's account, sent to Laurens, of the treason of Arnold and the death of André. The delicacy with which Arnold 's wife is mentioned. sensitiveness and almost reverence with which he writes about the last offices to the gallant sufferer : the ardor of his emotion , which inspires such subtle and eloquent reflections as his remarks on war, that « the authorized maxims and practices of war are the satires of human nature » - and of André , that « never perhaps, did any man suffer death with more justice or deserve it less. » These are noble monuments of the man.

In 1780, Hamilton was married on the 14th of December to the second daughter of General Schuyler, who survived her husband for half a century, dying at the age of 96 in the autumn of 1854.

In 1782, he withdrew from public life which then opened to him some of its rewards in occupation in the service of his country abroad, and devoted himself at Albany to the incessant study of the law for four months, when he was admitted to the Supreme Court. At the close of the year he took his seat in Congress, and is henceforth in political life. Becoming a delegate from New York to the Congress of 1787 which formed the Constitution, which is identified with his name as associated with Jay and Madison, he defended its provisions, and asserted its principles in the page of the Federalists, while it was before the several states of adoption. On the eighty-five numbers of which this work was composed, fifty-one were by Hamilton; Jay wrote but five, and Madison the remainder. The introduction and conclusion were from the pen of Hamilton. He also took the main discussion of the important points in respect to the taxation and the revenue, the army and militia, the power of the Executive and the Judiciary. When the Constitution — which he had done so much to organize and secure, both for the country at large and for his own State in New York

Convention — went into effect with the Presidency of Washington, that great man called again Hamilton to his side in the important post — perhaps the most important then in the national affairs — of Secretary of the Treasury. His cabinet papers and practical achievements in this position establish his great financial reputation. It was in allusion to these financial exertions and abilities that Daniel Webster paid an eloquent tribute to the genius of Hamilton in a public dinner speech in New York. « He smote the rock of the national resources, and abundant streams of revenue gushed forth. He touched the dead corpse of the public credit, and it sprung upon its feet. »

On the fourth of July, 1789 he delivered an Eulogium on Major-General Greene before the Society of Cincinnati, in which he gave full expression to his admiration of the life of that distinguished officer and friend of Washington, and traced his military career in a succint and forcible narrative. It is a model for compositions of its class.

The letters of Pacificus, in 1793, exhibit his course when France urged to abandonment of American neutrality. When in the Presidency of Adams, Washington was invited to the command of the national forces, on the prospect of an attack from France, he paid a last compliment to the military genius of his friend and aide of the Revolution. He stipulated that Hamilton should be his second in command. On the death of Washington he became Commander in Chief.

The too brief remainder of Hamilton's life was passed in New York, in the practice of the law and the agitations of politics, till his fatal and unnecessary duel with Burr, at Weehawken, closed his life July 12, 1804. His last great legal effort was made but a short time before his death in Feb., 1804, being his argument on the law of libel in the Supreme Court of the State of New York, in the case of the People against Harry Croswell, on an indictment for a libel on Jefferson, in which he maintained the popular privilege of the Jury in the decision of both law and fact.

Never was American more sincerely mourned. The eloquence of the pulpit, the bar, and the press was expended in oration, discourse, and eulogium. (Coleman of «The Evening Post» published a memorial of the occasion in A Collection of the Facts and Documents relative to the Death of Major-General Alexander Hamilton; with Comments: together with the various Orations, Sermons, and Eulogies that have been published or written on his Life and Character. By the Editor of The Evening Post, New York: J. Riley & C.° 1804).

Governor Morris delivered his funeral oration. Doctor Mason pronounced his Eulogy in the pulpit. His federal compatriot and friend, the eminent Fisher Ames, borrowed the language of Scripture in mourning over his death, and measuring his probable earthly future, had he lived by his undoubted past, vented his feelings in the exclamation, that « his soul stiffened with despair when he thought what Hamilton would have been. »

In 1851, an edition of the works of Hamilton, including his correspondence and official papers, with the exception of the Federalist was published with the assistance of Congress. It was prepared by John C. Hamilton.

In the last volume, two papers are given from the original MS. of Hamilton bearing upon Washington's Farewell address: one, an *Abstract of Points to form an Address*, the other, a draft in full, the variations from which, as delivered, are noted. This with the previous publication by Mr. Lenox, completed the materials for the study of the preparation of this interesting document.

III.

NOAH WEBSTER.

Noah Webster was born in West Hartford, Ct., October 16, 1758. He was of a good New England family, his father being a farmer and justice of the peace, and descendant of John Webster, an old governor of Connecticut, while his mother was similary connected with William Bradford the second governor of Plymouth colony. Webster was prepared by the clergyman of the town, the Rev. Nathan Perkins, for Yale, which he entered in 1774, and his junior year found himself in the midst of the interruptions of the Revolution. His father was serving in the militia raised to meet Burgoyne, and his son joined him. He was graduated, however, at the end of his four years, in the same class with Joel Barlow and Oliver Wolcott; when his father, on his return from Commencement, presented him with an eight dollar bill of the Continental currency, which was worth about four dollars in specie, with the information that he must for the future take care of himself. It was the fortune of many a noble-minded youth of the days of the Revolution. School-keeping was, as usual, the first resource. Law was the second. Pursuing his studies by himself in the intervals of his school, he was admitted to the bar in 1781. There was

little opportunity for the practice of the profession at the time, and the next year found Webster teaching a classical school at Goshen, in Orange Co., New York: Here he first entered upon the preparation of the School-books by which he subsequently became so well known to the country. He was encouraged in his plan on a visit to Philadelphia, by Mr. Madison and Professor Samuel Stanhope Smith. He revised his work the next winter, and returning to Hartford in 1783, published there his First Part of a Grammatical Institute of the English Language. The second and third parts followed; the whole comprising the famous Spelling book, an English Grammar and a Reader. These were the early titles: — A Grammatical Institute of the English Language comprising an Easy, Concise, and Systematic Method of Education, designed for the use of English Schools in America. In three parts: Part I Containing a new accurate standard of Pronunciation, by Noah Webster, A. M., Hartford, Printed by Hudson and Goodwin for the author. (This copy in the Library at Harvard, is without a date, but as the book was given Dec. 6, 1783, it is doubtless the first edition).

A Grammatical Institute of the English Language comprising an Easy, Concise, and Systematic Method of Education, designed for the use of English Schools in America. In three parts. Part II Containing a plain and comprehensive grammar, founded on the true principles and idioms of the language. By Noah Vebster, Jun., Esq. The third Edition, revised and amended. Philadelphia, Young and M' Culloch, 1787.

An American Selection of Lessons in Reading and Speaking calculated to improve the mind and refine the taste of youth, and also to instruct them in Geography, History and Politics of the United States, to which is (sic) prefixed, Rules in Elocution, and Directions for expressing the principal passion of the mind, being the third part of a Grammatical Institute of the English Language. By Noah Webster, Jun.,

Esq. The third edition greatly enlarged. *Begin with the infant in his cradle; let the first word he lisps be Washington.* Mirabeau, Philadelphia, Young and M. Culloch 1787.

The Spelling book revised at different times by its author, reached a sale during his lifetime of millions and supported his family for twenty years, while he was engaged in preparing his American Dictionary, by his copyright income of less than one cent per copy. It was the first word of its kind in the country, and long remained the only one in general use. With tape-tied back, and in thin wooden covers, it circulated among the trade in orders by the box.

Noah Webster had tact in discerning the wants of the country in his day, and providing for them in this spelling book. The two small volumes of the three parts of his Institute were quite a complete manual of juvenile education for the times. He simplified knowledge, and made it easy of acquisition, arranging the words of his spelling-book in ready forms to catch the eye and linger in the memory while he added brief lessons in difinitions, and geographical and other terms intermingling those homely and hearty lessons of fables and proverbs, which were not at all blunted in their way to the conscience by woodcuts such as the infantile state of the art in America then afforded of the most execrable character. There have been few moral lessons productive of the same effect in that country as the famous old fable *of the boy that stole apples* and who seats in the old woodcut alarmingly exposed, astride of the branch of a tree almost naked of foliage, while the farmer in small clothes, one arm akimbo the other in the most striking attitude, takes aim at the « sauce-box ». Many an honest fellow through the world has had his sense of duty painfully strengthened by the moral of the fable. Then there is that forlorn *Country-Maid and her Milkpail,* teaching the double lesson of the vanity of human expectations, and the folly of unnecessary grief — that chickens are not to be counted before they are hatched, or milk to be wept over after it

has been spilt. That story too, of the *Boy that went to the wood to look for bird nests when he should have gone to school*, and the *Descriptions of a Good Boy and a Bad* not forgetting the wonderful table of *Proverbs Councils and Maxims* all in words of one syllable, taxing the wisdom of nations, and the strong old Saxon powers of the English Language; all sound lessons calculated to make honest men and ingenious Benjamin Franklins.

One of the curiosities of the early editions of the Spelling-book is the frequent introduction at the foot of the page of warnings against mispronunciations which may be supposed to have been usual at the time. Thus « ask » is declared to be not « ax; » « card » not « caird; » « herb » not « yerb; » « wainscot » not « winchcott; » « resin » not « rosum; » « carry » not « kerry; » « chimney » not « chimbly; » « kernel » not « karnal; » « confiscate » not « confisticate. » If Webster saved his country from these and similar barbarities in a rude state of speech and writing, and with likelihood of errors of the kind being perpetuated among a thin and scattered population—and he doubtless did a great deal in the matter—he deserves well of the American nation.

The third part of the Institutes, the American selection was well made up with lessons in reading, lessons in speaking, dialogues, and poetry. There was the affecting story of La Roche, rules of behaviour from Chesterfield and of making money from Franklin, dialogue from Otway and Shakespeare, the story of Lord Peter, Martin and Jack, from the *Tale of a Tub*, and American history and patriotism in abundance, from the narratives of Greene and Ramsay, the orations of Warren and Handcock, and the poetry of Dwight, Freneau and Barlow. A later edition of this last division in the *American Selection* added Franklin's memorable story of the Whistle, Jefferson's Logan, General Bourgoyne's relation of the funeral of General Frazer, and Humphrey's Adventures of General Putnam. These were the « house-hold words » in school-houses, over hill and valley,

and in the homes of the forefathers in the youth of that nation.

An American Selection of Lessons in Reading and speaking; calculated to improve the minds and refine the taste of youth; to which are prefixed Rules in Elocution, and Direction for expressing the principal passions of the mind. By Noah Webster. Hogan's fifth improved edition. Philadelphia, 1810.

Webster next appeared as a writer on public affairs, publishing letters with the signature of Onorius in the *Connecticut Courant*, in defense of the measures of Congress in the pay of the Army. In the winter of 1784 he published a pamphlet *Sketches of American Policy* in which he urged the advantages of a general government. This, his biographer, Mr. Goodrich, remarks, was the « first distinct proposal made through the medium of the press, for a new constitution of the United States. »

The next year he made a journey to the South to petition the State legislatures for a copyright low; and long afterwards, when the act of Congress had made provision for the matter, used his influence at Washington in 1830, in securing the extension of the term. In 1785 Webster was at Baltimore preparing a course of lectures on the English Language which he delivered in the chief cities the following year, and afterwards published in his octavo entitled « Dissertation on the English Language. » In 1787 he was principal of an Episcopal Academy at Philadelphia, and when the Constitution of the United States was formed by the Convention in that year gave it his assistance in a pamphlet an *Examination of the* leading Principles of the Federal Constitution. In 1787 Webster published the *American Magazine* for a year at New York, a creditable though unsuccessful pioneer attempt in this department of literature. It was neat in arrangement, and though « miscellaneous » in its contents, started some interesting old antiquarian and scientific matter in the editor's letters to the

President Stiles on Western Fortifications and other topics. Its Americanism was well sustained by poetical extracts from Dwight, Barlow, and Trumbull.

In 1789, he published « Dissertations on the English Language, » with notes historical and critical with an Essay on a Reformed mode of Spelling. This work was dedicated to Franklin. The Essay on Orthography shows the bold starting-point of Webster in his efforts to create » an American Tongue. These views, though he was compelled ultimately to recede from them almost entirely, entered largely into several of his most important works. They were thus announced in 1789 :

The principal alterations, necessary to render orthography sufficiently regular and easy, are these :

1.st The omission of all superfluous or silent letters as (a) in bread. Thus bread, head, give, breast, built, meant, realm, friend, would be spelt : bred, hed, giv, brest, bilt, ment, relm, frend. Would this alteration produce any inconvenience, any embarrassment or expense ? By no means. On the other hand it would lessen the trouble of writing, and much more of learning the language, it would reduce the true pronunciation to a certainty and while it would assist foreigners and English children in acquiring the language, it would render the pronunciation uniform, in different parts of the country, and almost prevent the possibilities of changes.

2d. A substitution of a character that has a certain definite sound for one that is more vague and indeterminate. Thus by putting ee instead of ea or ie, the words mean, near, speak, grieve, zeal, would become : meen, neer, speek, greeve, zeel. This alteration could not occasion a moment's trouble at the same time it would prevent a doubt respecting the pronunciation; whereas the ea and the ie having different sounds, may give a learner much difficulty. Thus, greef should be substituted for grief; kee for key, beleev for believe; laf for laugh; dawter for daughter; plow for plough; tuf for tough; proov for prove; blud for blood and draft for draught.

In this manner ch in Greek derivatives should be changed into k; for the English ch has a soft sound as in cherish; but k always a hard sound. Therefore character, cholic, chorus, architecture, should be written karacter, korus, kolic, arkitecture; and were they thus written, no person could mistake their true pronunciation.

Thus ch in French derivatives should be changed into sh; machine, chaise, chevalier, should be written: masheen, shaze, shevalier; and pique, tour, oblique, should be written peek, toor, obleek.

3d. A trifling alteration in a character, or the addition of a point, would distinguish different sounds, without the substitution of a new character. Thus a very small stroke across th would distinguish its two sounds. A point over a vowel in this manner *ȧ* or *ȯ* or *i* might answer all the purpose of different letters. And for the diphthong ow, let the two letters be united by a small stroke or both be engraven of the same piece of metal, with the left hand line of the w united to the o.

These with a few other inconsiderable alterations, would answer every purpose, and render the orthography sufficiently correct and regular.

It is necessary however to remark here, that a few of the proposed alterations have been adopted lately, as tho' throu', draft, &c., instead of though, through, draught, &c. but they are not so many, however. Since Webster's time up to the present days, many literary men have, now and then, been making efforts to bring the matter into fact; but none of them could claim to success. Among others, lately, Mr. T. Roosevelt, President of the Republic of the U. S. A., took up the subject for further consideration, feeling confident to give a real impulse to the reform of the English orthography; but he experienced so many obstacles that he had to give up any idea of realizing his plan.

Some of the motives urged for this reform are curious. The simplicity of the language would not only be secured

and spelling made easy for children, and the pronunciation facilitated to foreigners; but such a reform would diminish the number of letters about one sixteenth, or eigteenth. This would save a page in eighteen; and a saving of an eighteenth in the expense of books is an advantage that should not be overlooked. The following suggestion is still more remarkable: But a capital advantage of this reform in these States would be that it would make a difference between the English orthography and the American.

If this suggestion could have been carried out it would have been necessary to have employed a large body of translators in the work of turning Shakespeare, Bacon and Milton into Americanese.

In 1789 he married the daughter of William Greenleaf of Boston and took up the pursuit of the law at Stratford which he followed with success for several years, till he was induced on the breaking out of the French excitement and the difficulties with Genet, to undertake a daily news-paper in New York in support of Washington's administration. He removed to New York at the close of 1793, and commenced the Minerva from the standing matter, of which he published a semi-weekly, the Herald, the first time this enterprise and economy had been practised. Out of these papers grew the present « Commercial Advertiser » And « Spectator ». In further defense of the Government, he published a pamphlet in 1794 on the Revolution in France; ad the following year sustained Jay's British Treaty in a series of papers signed Curtius, two of which where from the pen of James Kent, afterwards the Chancellor. It was about this time that Webster published his Prompter, a collection of common sayings, maxims, &c. after the manner of Dr. Franklin, in his little essays, and Poor Richard aphorisms. The title was borrowed from the theatre and its object was to remind the world of familiar but easily neglected truths of a practical character. Its twenty-nine brief chapter-comments upon proverbs and fallacies, have point and good sense.

As evidence of his activity of mind when the question connected with the then prevalent yellow fever agitated the country, he made researches on the great subject, and published the result of his investigation in two volumes 1799, entitled a History of Pestilential and Epidemic Disease with the principal phenomena of the physical world, which precede and accompany them, and observation deduced from the fact stated. 2 Vols. 8vo. Harford, Hudson and Goodwin, 1799. When the question of the rights of neutral nations arose, with the war of the French revolution he published in 1802 a treatise on the subject, and the same year, Historical Notices of the Origin and State of Banking Institutions and Insurance Offices.

In 1798, Webster took up his residence in New Heaven, and soon retired altogether from the management of his New York journals. In 1802 he published an essay on the Rights of Neutral Nations, in reference to the outrages on American commerce by the European powers during the French Revolution. In 1806 he published a Dictionary of the English Language in octavo and the next year entered upon the preparation of his most important work « An American Dictionary of the English Language. » For this work he entered upon a comprehensive study of changes of language since the date of the last great work of Dr. Johnson, applied himself to the careful study of definitions, and entered largely upon the investigation of the origin and growth of languages in comparison of the vocabularies of different nations. He prepared a work still in manuscript, « A synopsis of Words, in twenty languages.

From 1802 to 1822 Webster resided at Amherst, Mass., when he returned to New Heaven.

He further in 1824 made a tour to France and England, where he continued his researches at the libraries of Paris and Cambridge. In 1828, when he was at the age of seventy, the Dictionary finally appeared at New York in two volumes quarto. Twenty five hundred were printed in America, and

three thousand in England where the publication was superintended by E. H. Barker, the editor of Stephen's Greek Thesaurus.

Some fears had been entertained of Webster's well known disposition to tamper with the established orthography. An expression of them is recorded in the Jay correspondence, a letter which Webster wrote en 1813 to John Jay, who had probably read the Essay on the American tongue drew from that prudent Statesman a hint on the character of his labors: « It is not improbable that doubts prevail respecting the design and tendency of the work you have in hand. The literary productions of Britain and America being interesting to each other, many are of opinion, and I concur in it, that the English language and its orthography should be the same in both countries. Apprehensions have been entertained that your dictionary would tend to impair that sameness; and those apprehensions may, to a certain extent, have had an unfavorable influence. » To which Webster responded: « It is not improbable, that some ill-founded apprehensions that I might attempt changes of orthography have had their effect in preventing subscriptions; but there are several other causes. On the subject of orthography gentlemen might have been easy, as any considerable changes must prevent the sale and use of a work of the sort, and they might rationally conclude that I would not put myself to an immense trouble and expense to write a book which would not find purchasers.

My plan is different from anything before attempted. I have examined and collated the radical words in twenty languages, including the seven Asiatic languages or rather dialects, of the Assyrian stock. This will enable me to present many things in the English language, which have hitherto been obscure. Indeed, this research has opened a field entirely new, and it is probable will lead to many important discoveries, not only in the origin and affinity of languages, but in history sacred and profane. »

In 1821, he writes again to Jay of his « Synopsis of

radical words in more than twenty languages » which has occupied him ten years and regrets that « I did not begin my studies early enough. I am now sixty three years of age and after this age a small portion only of active life remains. I have thought that after submitting my M.S.S. to able judges, if they should think the work to have merit enough to command a sale in England, I may visit that country, and attempt to sell the copy there first; and indeed revise the work at Oxford. » The work was well received on its appearance, and merited the attention by the new words added which had come into use, by the increased number of definitions marking new uses of the language and by its labors in the wide field of etymology.

Something, it was felt was due to the single-handed perseverance of the yankee school-master, now recognised as a successful worker in the field where Dr. Johnson had gained, his most imposing laurels. Had Webster, with his perseverance and energy, possessed a like degree of sound judgment, his reputation would have been unassailed. As it was, he was regarded with suspicion, and frequently openly opposed; for his well known views as a reformer of the language laid him particularly open to attack; since speech being common property, every one was bound more or less to question his proceedings. Though the dictionary bearing Webster's name is now in very general use it has secured this result by the number of its words, and particularly the extent of his scientific terms and the accuracy of their definitions, in spite of the peculiar Websterianisms of orthography. His mistake as the compiler of a dictionary, at the outset was, in seeking to amend the language, while his duty was simply to record the use of words by the best authors. In the attempt to impose new conditions, and with his American innovations, he placed himself beyond the recognition of the highest authorities of the language in the Universities of England and the Colleges of America.

His first dictionary, published in 1806 was virtually

ignored by himself and his principles of orthography must be gathered from his later publications. In view of the disturbance created in the literary world by his innovations since 1828, it would be natural to suppose that these innovations were very numerous; but such is not the fact. The changes were few in number; but being applied to words in common use they gained a factitious importance by frequent repetitions. His present system—carried out so inconsistently as scarcely to deserve the name, however — may be thus briefly stated: I. Finding that many words of French origin terminating in *re* had been in adoption transported to *er*, as *cider*, *chamber*, etc., he decided that all words so adopted should be so transposed, and accordingly, changed *spectre, theatre*, etc., into *specter* and *theater*, not reflecting that the changes previously made had been confined to words which did not require *re*-transposition in their derivatives; and Webster's inconsistency here was that while he wrote *theater* he also wrote theatrical. II. He expunged the second *l* from *traveller*, *libeller,* etc., because he deemed it superfluous; and he added a second *l* to *foretel, distil,* etc.; because the second *l* was wanted in the derivatives *foretelling*, etc. In this latter change he laid down the principle that the spelling of their derivatives must govern the spelling of the primitive; and yet, although in conformity to this rule, he also changed *defence, pretence* and *offence,* into *defense*, *pretense*, and *offense*, he omitted to change such words as *consequence, inference*, *sentence* etc., while he retained the correct spelling of their derivatives *consequential*, *sententious*, etc. III. He changed *ton* to *tun* and did not change *won* to *wun*; he changed *mould* and *moult*, to *mold* and *molt*, and did not change *court* to *cort;* and he changed *practise*, the verb, to *practice.* This substantially Webster's orthographical reform.

In 1833 Noah Webster published his revised edition of the Bible, with what he considered improvement of the language. (The Holy Bible containing the Old and New Testaments in the common version. With amendments of the lan-

guage by Noah Webster, LL. D. New Haven published by Durrie & Peck. Sold by Hezekiah Howe & Co and A. H. Maltby, New Haven and by N. & J. White, New York 1833). It was a rash and unnecessary attempt, and was not successful. His design is thus expressed by himself in the preface « In my own view of this subject a version of the Scriptures for popular use should consist of words expressing the sense which is most common in popular usage, so that the *first idea* suggested to the reader should be the true meaning of such words, according to the original languages. That many words in the present version fail to do this is certain. My principal aim is to remedy this evil « This principle is enlarged upon. I have been careful to avoid unnecessary innovations, and to retain the general character of the style. The principal alterations are comprised in three classes : —

« I. The substitution of words and phrases now in good use for such as are wholly obsolete, or deemed below the dignity and solemnity of the subject.

« II. The correction of errors in grammar.

« III. The insertion of euphemisms, words and phrases which are not very offensive to delicacy, in the place of such as cannot with propriety be uttered before a promiscuous audience.

« A few errors in the translation which are admitted on all hands to be obvious have been corrected.

« To avoid giving offence to any denomination of Christians, I have not knowingly made any alteration in the passages of the present version on which the different denominations rely for the support of their tenets. »

An enumeration of the « principal alterations » is made in an introduction. From this it appears that *who* is substituted for *which* when it refers to plants and things without life; *why* is substituted for wherefore when inquiry is made; *my* and *thy* are generally substituted for mine and thine when used as adjectives; *assemble*, *collect*, or *convene* for what Webster is pleased to call « the tautological words » *gather to-*

gether; know or *knew* for *wist*, *wit* and *wot; sixty* for *three score,* and *eighty* for *four score.* It would be a melancholy task to continue the list. As such attempt, however may be made again, though it is to be trusted with like ill success, it is a matter of duty to point out the radical defect of mind which led to these rash suggestions. They argue an essential common, prosaic intellect, deficient in taste, feeling, imagination; wanting in a knowledge of the subtle philosophical links of association which have long attached the English-speaking world by a power which equally hold heart and mind to the standard version of the Holy Scriptures. When Webster substitutes *sixty* for *three score* he says « It appears to him most eligible to retain, but one mode of specifying numbers » and adds his favorite maxims that « uniformity is preferable to diversity » a most absurd statement in a world beneficently provided with diversity on all sides. When he substitutes *O that* for *would god*, he is at the pains to destroy the force of expression as in the undying sound of the lament of David. « O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would god I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son! » which he profanely alters to « O that I died for the » stating as a reason for the change that « the insertion of the phrases in the version has given countenance to the practice of introducing them into discourses and public speeches with a levity that is incompatible with a due veneration for the name of God « For the same reason there would be no religion at all that is sacred. The same remarks apply to the unhappy substitution of *by no means* for *God forbid.* In the sermon on the Mount, Noah Webster alters « Therefore *take no thought*, saying what shall we eat » into « therefore *be not* anxious », seeking to justify his meddlesome change by the plea that he is giving more force to the expression, such a remark as this might be expected to proceed from a schoolboy or a foreigner who had yet his acquaintance to make with the language, rather than from a man who had professedly passed his life in its study. Other al-

terations of archaisms, such as putting *male child* for *man child; falsehood* for *leasing; boiled* for *sodden; creeping animal* for *creeping thing* (a creeping thing, he tells us being « more properly a creeping plant than a reptile »); *advanced* for *stricken* in age, and the like, on the ground of accomodating the language to the use of the day, show a similar unconsciousness of the moral relations of the subject, and advantage. Of the Bible in providing a store-house of words and securing the permanency of the language. In the few cases in which the words of the translation have grown obsolete, it is rather an advantage that a disadvantage that there are special terms set apart from common use as especially biblical. The imagination is affected by them ; the sense of sanctity and awe is enhanced by them. The poverty of mind which begets such attempts leads so soon to indecorum and what must be fain considered irreverence, that it would be perhaps unwise here to pursue the subject further. A great literary and moral interest is involved in it.

In 1840 a new edition of the *Dictionary* appeared, with several thousand new words added, and improvements in scientific definitions and the introduction of phrases from foreign languages.

Early in 1843, the last year of his life he gave his attention to a revision of the appendix of his dictionary, adding several hundred words. He had given thirty-six years to the work.

In 1843 he published, at New York *A collection of Papers on Political, Literary, and Moral Subjects.* Its chief contents are a republication of his tracts on the French Revolution, the Right of Search, the British Treaty, the Copyright Question, and a number of papers on topics of politics and education.

This was at the dose of a long life spent with unwearied activity in the pursuit of knowledge, with his faculties unimpaired, in the cheerful retrospect of a life of happy employment, and with the consolation of religion, he expired.

after a brief illness, at New Haven, May 28, 1843, in his eighty-fifth year.

Of Webster's plain habits of living, and of his time given to study, there is quaint account in a letter from his pen, dated November 21, 1836 addressed to Dr. Thomas Miner, in answer to an inquiry as to his mode of life, in which he says:

« I have never been a hard student unless a few years may be excepted; but I have been a steady persevering student. I have rarely used lamp or candle light, except once, when reading law, and then I paid dear for my imprudence for I injured my eyes. My practice has usually been to rise about half an hour before the sun, and make use of all the light of that luminary. But I have never or rarely been in a hurry. When I first undertook the business of supporting General Washington's administration, I labored too hard in writing and translating from the French papers for my paper, or in composing pamphlets. In two instances I was so exhausted that I expected to die for I could not perceive any pulsation in the radial artery; but I recovered. While engaged in composing my Dictionary, I was often so much excited by the discoveries I made, that my pulse, whose ordinary action is scarcely 60 beats to the minute, was accelerate to 80 or 85.

My exercise has not been violent nor regular. While I was in Amherst I cultivated a little land, and used to work at making hay, and formerly I worked in my garden, which I cannot now do. Until within a few years, I used to make my fires in the morning, but I never or rarely walked before breakfast. My exercise is now limited to walking about the city to purchase supplies for my family. For a part of my life, the last forty years I have had a horse of my own, but I never rode merely for health; and a part of the time, more than half I have not been able to keep a horse. My eyes have from a child, been subject to a slight inflammation, but the sight has been good. I began to use spectacles when

fifty years of age, or a little more, and that was the time when I began to study and prepare material for my dictionary. I had had the subject in contemplation some year before, and had made memorandum on the margin of Johnson's Dictionary, but I did not set myself to the work till I wore spectacles.

When I finished my copy, I was sitting at my table in Cambridge, England, January, 1825. When I arrived at the last word, I was seized with a tremor that made it difficult to proceed. I however, summoned up strength to finish the work, and then walking about the room I soon recovered.

IV.

WASHINGTON IRVING.

Washington Irving was born April 3, 1783, in the city of New York. He was the youngest son of a merchant, William Irving, a native of Scotland, who had married an English lady and been settled in his new country some twenty years. His early education was much influenced by the tastes of his brothers, who had occupied themselves with literature; and he fell in himself with a stock of the best old English authors, the study of which generously unfolded his happy natural disposition. Chaucer and Spenser were his early favorites. He had an ordinary School education, and at the age of sixteen commenced the study of the law. In 1802 he wrote for the *Morning Chronicle*, a New York paper edited by his brother Dr. Peter Irving, a series of essays on the theatres, manners of the town, and kindred topics with the signatures of Jonathan Oldstyle. A pamphlet edition of these was published in 1824 without the sanction of the author. In 1804, led by some symptoms of ill health apparently of a pulmonary affection, he visited the south of Europe, sailing from New York for Bordeaux in May, and travelling on his arrival by Nice to Genoa, where he passed two months, thence to Sicily, making a tour of the island, and crossing from Pa-

lermo to Naples. Thence through Italy and Switzerland to France, where he resided several months in Paris, and reached England through Flanders and Holland, gathering a stock of materials for his future writings. While at Rome on this journey he became acquainted with Washington Allston, and so far participated in his studies as to meditate for a time the profession of a painter for which he had naturally a taste.

After an absence of two years he returned to New York in March 1806. He took up again the study of the law, and was admitted, at the close of the year attorney-at-law. He however never practised the profession. *Salmagundi, or the Whim-Whams and opinions of Launcelot Langstaff Esq... and others*, was at that time projected, and the publication commenced in a series, of small eighteenmo numbers, appearing about once a fortnight from the Shakespeare Gallery of Longworth. The first is dated January 24, 1807. It was continued for a year, through twenty numbers. Paulding wrote a good portion of this work, William Irving the poetry, and Washington Irving the remainder. The humors of the day are hit off in this squib in so agreable a style that it is still read with interest, what was piquant gossip then being amusing history now. It was the intention of Irving to have extended these papers by carrying out the invention and marrying Will Wizard to the eldest Miss Cockloft, with of course a great wedding at Cockloft Hall, the original of which mansion was a veritable edifice owned by Gouverneur Kemble on the Passaic, a favorite resort of Geoffrey Crayon in his youthful days. Among other originals of these Sketches we have heard it mentioned that some of the peculiarities of Dennie, the Author, were hit off in the character of Launcelot Langstaff. The well defined picture of « My uncle John » is understood to have been from the pen of Paulding, his, too, was the original sketch of the paper entitled « Autumnal Reflections, » though extended and wrought up by Irving.

Knickerbocker's History of New York was published in

December, 1809. It is a History of New York from the beginning of the world to the end of the Dutch Dynasty, containing, among many surprising and curious matters, the unutterable Ponderings of Walter the Doubter, the disastrous Projects of William the Testy; and the chivalric achievements of Peter the Headstrong; the three Dutch Governors of New Amsterdam; being the only Authentic History of the times that ever has been or ever will be published. By Diedrich Knickerbocker.

Knickerbocker's History of New York was commenced by Washington Irving in company with his brother Peter Irving, with the idea of parodying a hand book, which had just appeared, entitled « A Picture of New York ». In emulation of an historical account in that production, it was to burlesque the local records, and describe in an amusing way the habits and statistics of the town. Dr. Irving departing for Europe, and leaving the work solely with his brother, the latter confined it to the historical part, which had grown in his hands into a long comic history. The humorous capabilities of the subject were turned to account in the happiest way, the fun being broad enough not to be confounded with the realities, through a venerable clergyman, who was on the lookout for a history upon that subject from a clerical brother is said to have begun the work in good faith and to have been only gradually warmed to a consciousness of the joke. The highest honor ever paid to the authentic history of Knickerbocker was the quotation from it — in good latin phrase — by Goeller, German annotator of Thucydides, in illustration of a passage of the Greek author. Addo locum Washingtonis Irvingii *Hist Novi Eboraci*, lib. VII, cap. 5. To humor the pleasantry preliminary advertisements were inserted before the publication in the *Evening Post* « calling for information of a small elderly gentleman, dressed in an old black coat and cocked hat, by the name of Knickerbocker etc., who had left his lodging at the Columbian Hôtel in Mulberry street; then a statement that the old gentleman had left a very curious kind

of a written book in his room » followed by the announcements of the actual book « in two volumes duodecimo, price three dollars », from the publishers Inskeep and Bradford— to pay the bill of his landlord.

To the last revised edition of this work in 1850, which contains some very pleasant additions, the author has prefixed an « apology » , which , however , offers little satisfaction to the irates families who have considered their honor aggrieved by the publication of this extravagant burlesque — for the incorrigible author insists upon it that he has brought the old Dutch manners and times into notice as proved by the innumerable Knickerbocker Hôtels, steamboats, ice carts, and other appropriations of the name, and has added not only to the general hilarity, but to the harmony of the city, the popular traditions, which he has set in vogue « forming a convivial currency, linking our whole community together in good humor and good fellowship; the rallying points of home feelings; the seasoning of civic festivities; the staple of local tales, and local pleasantries. » We should attach little importance to the subject, had it not been made a matter of comment, in the New York Historical Society in an address before which body it was gravely held up to reprehension. The truth of the matter is that the historians should have occupied the ground earlier, if possible, and not have given the first advantage to the humorists. We do not find, however, that the burlesque has at all damaged the subject in the hands of Brodhead, who has at length brought to bear a system of original investigation and historical inquiry upon the worthy Dutch settlers of New Amsterdam; or deteriorated a whit the learned labors of O' Callaghan, who has illustrated the early Dutch annals with faithful diligence. The style of Knickerbocker is of great felicty. There is just enough flavor of English classic reading to give the riant, original material, the highest gusto. The descriptions of nature and manners are occasionally very happy in a serious way and the satire is much of it, of that universal character which will bear

transplantation to wider scenes and interests. The laughter compelling humor is irresistible, and we may readily believe the story of that arch wag himself, Judge Brackenridge, exploding over a copy of the work, which he had smuggled with him to the bench.

In 1810 Irving wrote a biographical sketch of the poet Campbell, which, has prefixed to an edition of the poet's works published in Philadelphia. The circumstance which led to this was Irving's acquaintance with Archibald Campbell, a brother of the author, who was residing in New York, and who was desirous of finding a purchaser of an American edition of O' Connor's « Child » which he had just received from London. To facilitate this object Irving wrote the preliminary sketch from facts furnished by his brother. We afterwards led to a personal acquaintance between the two authors when Irving visited England. In 1850 after Campbell's death, when his « Life and letters » edited by Dr. Beattie, were being republished by Harpers in New-York, Irving was applied to for a few preliminary words of introduction. He wrote a letter, prefixed to the volumes, in which he speaks gracefully and nobly of his acquaintance with Campbell, many of the virtues of whose private life were first disclosed to the public in Dr. Beattie's publication.

After the perpetration of the Knickerbocker, Irving engaged with two of his brothers in mercantile business, as a silent partner. The second war with Great Britain then broke out, when he took part in the spirit of the day; edited the *Analectic Magazine*, published at Philadelphia, by Moses Thomas, writing an eloquent series of biographies, accompanying portraits of the American Naval Captains; and in 1814, joined the military staff of Governor Tompkins as aide-de-camp and military secretary, with the title of Colonel. When the war was ended the next year, he sailed for Liverpool, in the month of May, made excursions into Wales, some of the finest countries of England, and to the highlands of Scotland, intending to visit the continent. The commercial revulsion which fol-

lowed the war overwhelmed the house with which he was connected, and was thrown upon his resources as an author.

Repairing to London his excursions and his observations on rural life and manners furnished materials for some of the most attractîve portions of his *Sketch Book*. The publication of this was commenced in New York, in large octavo pamphlets, a style afterwards adopted by Dana in his « Idle Man » and Longfellow in his « Outre Mer. » When the first volume had appeared in this form it attracted the notice of Jerdan, who received a copy brought over from America by a passenger, republished some of the papers in the Literary Gazette and a reprint of the whole was in prospect by some bookseller, when the author applied to Murray to undertake the work. The answer vas civil but the publisher declined it. Irving then addressed Sir Walter Scott, by whom he had previously been cordially received at Abbotsford on his visit in 1819, of which he has given so agreeable an account in the paper in the Crayon Miscellany to secure his assistance with Constable. Scott had been an admirer of Irving's early writings, having received a copy of Knickerbocker, not long after its publication, through Mr. Henry Brevoort. Irving took him a letter of introduction from Campbell, to whom Scott sent a message, thanking him for « one of the best and pleasantest acquaintances I have made this many a day. »— Lockhart's Scott, ch. XXXIX. Scott in the most friendly manner promised his aid, and offered Irving the editorial chair of a weekly periodical to be established at Edimburgh with a salary of five hundred pounds, but he had too vivid a sense of the toils and responsabilities of such an office to accept it. He put the first volume of the *Sketch Book* to press at his own expence, with John Miller, February, 1820; it was Getting along tolerably, when, the bookseller failed in the first month. Scott came to London at this time, reopened the matter with Murray, who issued the entire work, and thenceforward Irving had a publisher for his successive works « conducting himself in all his dealings with that fair open, and liberal spirit which

had obtained for him the well merited appellation of the Prince of Booksellers. Murray bought the copyright for two hundred pounds, which he subsequently increased to four hundred, with the success of the work.

In 1820 Irving took up his residence for a year in Paris, where he became acquainted with the poet Moore, and enjoyed his intimacy, with the best English society in the Metropolis. In the spring of 1821, Moore speaks in his Diary of Irving's being hard at work writing his Bracebridge Hall, having in the course of ten days written about one hundred and thirty pages of the size of those in the Sketch Book, adding « this is amazing rapidity. » *Bracebridge Hall, or the Humourists*, is a series of Sketches of English rural life, holiday customs, and refined village character of Sir Roger de Coverley portraiture, centring about a fine old establishement in Yorkshire. The characters of Master Simon Jack Tibbetts, and General Harbottle do credit to the School of Goldsmith and Addison. The Stout Gentleman, the Village Choir, the delicate Story of Annette Delarbre display the best powers of the author; while the episodes of the Dutch tales of Dolph Heyliger and the Storm Ship relieve the monotony of the English description.

The winter 1822 was passed by Irving at Dresden. He returned to Paris in 1823 and in the December of the following year published his *Tales of a Traveller*, with the stories of the Nervous Gentleman, including that fine piece of animal spirits and picturesque description, the Bold Dragoon, the series of pictures of literary life in Buckthorne and his Friends — in which there is some of his happiest writings, blending humor, sentiment, and a Kindly indulgence for the failures of life — the romantic Italian Stories, and, as in the preceding work, a sequel of New World legends of Dutchmen and others, built upon the writer's invention in the expansion of the fertile theme of Captain Kidd, the well Known piratical and Money-concealing adventurer. For this work Moore tells us that Murray gave Irving fifteen hundred pounds, and « he might have had two thousand.» These books were still pu-

blished in the old form in numbers in New York, simultaneously with their English appearance.

The following winter of 1825 was passed by Irving in the south of France, and early in the next year he went to Madrid, at the suggestion of Alexander H. Everett, then Minister to Spain, for the purpose of translating the important series of new documents relating to the voyages of Columbus, just collected by Navarrete. For a translation was substituted the *History of the Life and Voyage of Christopher Columbus* to which the *Voyage and Discoveries of the Companions of Columbus* were afterwards added. The Columbus was published in 1828 and the English Edition brought its author three thousand guineas. The Columbus gained him a high honor in the receipt of one of the fifty guineas gold medals, provided by George IV, for eminence in historical writing, its companion bein assigned to Hallam. A tour to the South of Spain in this and in the following year provided the materials for *a Chronicle of the conquest of Grenada, and the Alhambra, or the New Sketch Book.* The latter is dedicated, May, 1831, to Wilkie, the artist who was companion with the author in some of his excursions. Irving spent three months in the old Moorish palace.

He sometime after in America published his *Legends of the Conquest of Spain*, (in 1835) which with his *Mahomet* and Successors (1849 - 50) complete a series of Spanish and Moorish subjects marked by the same general and poetic treatment; the fancy of the writer evidently luxuriating in the personal freedom of movement of his heroes, their humor of individual character, and the warm oriental coloring of the theme.

In July, 1829 Irving left Spain for England, having been appointed secretary of Legation to the American Embassy at London, when Mr M' Lane was Minister. He retired on the arrival of Van Buren. The Univesity of Oxford conferred on him 1831 the degree of L.L. D. He arrived in America on his return, May 21, 1832, after an absence of

seventeen years, and his friends, at New York commemorated his arrival by a public dinner at which Chancellor Kent presided. A few months later, in the Summer, Irving accompanied Mr. Ellsworth, one of the commissioners for removing the Indian Tribes west of the the Mississippi, in his journey, which he had described on his *Tour on the Prairies* published in the *Crayon Miscellany* in 1835. *His Abbotsford and Newstead Abbey* formed another volume of the series. In 1836 he published his *Astoria*, attracted to the subject by an early fondness for the character of the trappers and voyageurs whom he had seen in his youth in Canada. He was assisted in the preparation of his work by his nephew, Mr Pierre M. Irving.

Another undertaking of a similar character was his adventures of Captain Bonneville, U. S. A. *In the Rocky Mountains and the far West* prepared from M.SS. of that traveller, but made an original work by the observation and Style of the writer.

From 1839, for two years, Irving contributed a series of paper monthly to the *Knickerbocker Magazine.* Among these tales and sketches are two narratives. *The early Experiences of Ralph Kingwood*, and *Mountjoy, or some passages out of the Life* of a *Castle Builder.* A number of these paper, with some others from the English Annuals and other sources, were first collected in 1855 in a volume with the title of Wolfert 's Roost.

In February, 1842 he was appointed Minister to Spain, an office which he occupied for the next four years. He then returned home and there after continued to reside at his cottage residence « Sunny side » near Tarry town, on the banks of the Hudson, the wery spot which he had described years before in the Legend of Sleepy Hollow, as the castle of the Heer Van Fassel illuminated with the throng of country beauties, and that prodigality of « a genuine Dutch country tea - table » in the presence of which the mouth of the schoolmaster Ichabott watered, and his skin dilated as it embraced

the ample cheer. Of this neighborhood, Irving also wrote in that tale of his youth.—« If ever I should wish for a retreat whither I might steal from the world and its distractions, and dream quietly away the remainder of a troubled life, I know of none more promising than this valley. » At this retreat since his last return from Europe he lived, in the midst of a family circle, composed of his brother and his nieces hospitably entertaining his friends, occasionally visiting different portions of the country, and employing his pen in the composition of his *Life of Washington*, the first volume of which work in 1855 was in progress through the press. The preparation of this, the publication of *Oliver Goldsmith* a *Biography*, an enlargment of a life which he had prefixed to an edition in Paris of that author 's works, adapting the researches of Prior and Forster, and a revised edition of his own writings published by Putnam, of which several of the volumes have been published in a more costly form, enriched by the vigorous and refined designs of Darley, have been his latest literary productions.

In estimating the genius of Irving, we can hardly attach too high a value to the refined qualities and genial humor which have made his writings favorites whenever the English language is read. The charm is in the proportion, the keeping, the happy vein which inspires happiness in return. It is the felicity of but few authors, out of the vast stock of English literature, to delight equally young and old. The tales of Irving are the favorite authors of childhood, and their good humor and amenity can please where most literature is weariness, in the sick room of a convalescent. Every influence which breathes from these writings is good and generous. Their sentiment is always just and manly, without cant or affectation; their humor is always within the bounds of property. They have a fresh inspiration of American nature, which is not the less nature for the art with which it is adorned. The color of personality attaches us throughout to the author, whose humor of character is always

to be felt. This happy art of presenting rude and confused objects in an orderly pleasurable aspect, every where to be met with in the pages of Irving, is one of the most beneficient in literature. The philosopher Hume said a turn for humor was worth to him ten thousand a year, and it is this gift which the writings of Irving impart. To this quality is allied an active fancy and poetic imagination, many of the choicest passages of Irving being interpenetrated by his vivifying power. On one or two occasions only, we believe in some stanzas to the Passaic River some delicate lines, descriptive of a painting by Gilbert Stuard Newton, and a theatrical address, once pronounced by Cooper at the Park Theatre, has he ever put pen to verse; but he is an essential poet in prose, in many exquisite passages of vivid description from Westminster Abbey and English rural scenery to the vaste beanties of the great region beyond the Mississippi. Parallel with the ruder but more robust and athletic writings of Cooper, the volumes of Irving improved American Society, and rendered the national name beloved and respected abroad. Both, to the honor of their country, have never lacked admirers from the start; both have been followed by diligent schools of imitators and their books will continue to be read together, with equal honor as the complement of each other.

V.

THOMAS PAINE.

The Literary merits of Paine, associated with his services to the American cause during the Revolution, well entitle him to a place in this collection.

The grossness of his pen in his attacks on the Christian religion, and the miserable last years of his life as painted by no friendly biographer, have thrown into the shade both his patriotism and the merits of his style, in those days when he went to America, and in clear trumpet tones sounded the notes of resistance to oppression, and faith in the success of the armies of Washington. In this mixed world of good and evil we must learn to separate virtues and vices, and « pick our good from out much ill ».

Thomas Paine was born of Quaker parentage, the son of a stay-maker, at Thetford, in the county of Norfolk, England, January 29, 1736. He received a grammar-school education, in his native town, and early developed a taste for poetry, which his parents discouraged, confining him at the age of thirteen, for the next five years to his father's uninteresting and laborious calling. In the twentieth year, young Paine went to London, where he worked at his trade,

relieving its monotony by a cruise in a privateer. In 1758 he is stay-maker again at Dover, and in 1759 in the same occupation at Sandwich, where he married the daughter of an exciseman, who died the following year. The occupation of his father-in-law opened a new prospect for him, and he abandoned his trade for an office in the excise, which he attained after some preliminary training in his home at Thetford, at the age of twenty five. His business of excisement was varied by employment as teacher in two London academies, a position which enabled him to acquire some philosophical knowledge from the lectures delivered in the metropolis. In 1768 he became established at Lewes, in Sussex as exciseman, where he married the daughter of a grocer and tobacconist recently deceased, to whose trade he succeeded. He belonged to a club of the place where he maintained his stiff Whig opinions with pertinacity and elegance of expression. He wrote at Lewes his ode *on the Death of General Wolfe* which was published in the *Gentleman's Magazine.*

His business as a grocer seems to have led him into some unwarrantable smuggling practices, for which he was dismissed the service in 1774, when he went to London as an adventurer, having previously parted with his wife by mutual agreement. He was fortunate in procuring a letter to Benjamin Franklin from a commissioner of the excise, who had been impressed with the ability with which Paine had urged an increase of salary for the officers of that body, in a pamphlet which he had drawn up in their behalf, Franklin advised him to go to America, whither he set off immediately, reaching Philadelphia in the year 1775, on the eve of the actual outbreak of the Revolution.

He was at once employed by Aitken a bookseller of tbat city, with a salary of Lst. 25 currency a year, as editor of the *Pennsylvanian Magazine*, for which he wrote the introduction, a felicious sentence of which has been noticed by his biographers. Alluding to the season, January, and

the quite as chilling nature of such enterprises in those times, he says: « Thus encompassed with difficulties, the first num-« ber of the Pennsylvanian Magazine a favorable reception; « of which we shall only say, that like the early snowdrop « it comes forth in a barren season, and contents itself with « foretelling the reader that choicer flowers are preparing to « appear. » Dr. Rush, who was attracted by his clever conduct of the Magazine, (the Ode on Wolfe and some spirited Reflections on Lord Clive from his pen, printed in the Magazine were noticeable articles for the time), formed his acquaintance in Aitken's bookstore, and suggested to him the preparation of a popular book to meet the objections to separation from the mother country. This was the origin of the famous pamphlet *Common sense*. Paine thought of calling it « Plain truth » when Rush suggested the title which it bears. The original edition of it was published in Philadelphia by Robert Bell, with whom it is said that Paine was then employed as a clerk. — Notes on the Provincial Hist, of Penn., by T. J. Wharton. Penn., Hist. Soc. Memoirs, 1825 pag. 151, where some amusing details are given of Bell. He was a Scotchman who came to Philadelphia in 1766. He had been a partner as a bookseller in Dublin with the facetious George Alexander Stevens. He was first an auctioneer and afterwards a Bookseller in Philadelphia, where he published Blackstone's Commentaries by subscription in 1772, « a stupendous enterprise for the time. » The revolution broke up his business, and he turned auctioneer again and peddler, dying at Richmond in Virginia, in 1784. He headed his auction announcements « Jewels and diamonds to be sold or sacrificed by Robert Bell humble provedore to the sentimentalists » and sought subscribers to Blackstone with the invitation, « Intentional encouragers who wish for a participation of this sentimental banquet, are requested to send their names to Robert Bell. »

The influence of such a pamphlet upon the American cause was very great, Rush says it was published « with an

effect which has been rarely produced by types and paper in any age or country. » « I think this pamphlet » says Ashbel Green of Princeton, in his autobiography, « had a greater run than any other ever published in our country. » It was printed anonymously, and it was a considerable time before its author was known or suspected. In the meantime large editions were frequently issued; and in newspapers, at taverns, and at almost every place of public resort, it was advertised, and very generally in these words : « Common sense, for eighteen-pence » I lately looked into a copy of this pamphlet, and was ready to wonder at its popularity, and the effect it produced when originally published. But the truth is, it struck a string which required but a touch to make it vibrate. The country was ripe for independence, and only needed somebody to tell the people so with decision, boldness, and plausibility. Paine did this recklessly, having nothing to do whether his suggestions were received favorably or unfavourably, while wiser and better men than he were yet maturing their minds by reflection, and looking well to every step which they took or advised. Paine's talent, and he certainly possessed it eminently, was to make a taking and striking appeal to popular feelings, when he saw it tending towards a point to which he wished to push it, whether for good or for evil.

The following lines appear in Carey's American Museum I. 167.

AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE

When pregnant Nature strove relief to gain,
Her nurse was Washington, her midwife Paine :
The infant, Independence, scarce began
To be, ere he had ripen'd into man.
France his godfather, Britain was his road,
Congress his guardian, and his father God.

« I sent you from New York » writes John Adams to his wife, Philadelphia, February 18, 1776, « a pamphlet intituled Common Sense, written in vindication of doctrines

which there is reason to expect that the further encroachments of tyranny and depredations of oppression will soon make the common faith; unless the cunning ministry, by proposing negotiations and terms of reconciliation, should divert the present current from its channel. » John Adams, in his Díary of 1779 tells us that on his arrival in France in that year, he was greeted as the famous Adams on the strength of the authorship of this pamphlet, which was translated into French having been ascribed to him. — Works III. 189.

No copyright was taken out, it was printed to the number of a hundred thousand, and its author, in the midst of success, was in debt to his printer for the work.

Paine's subsequent pretentions to priority in his Common Sense in setting the ball of revolution in motion were simply absurd. He arrived a foreigner under difficulties, a few months before the battle of Lexington. John Adams, in a letter to Ruth, May 1, 1807, seriously notices these vaporings. The fact is that Paine, admitting his merits to the full, was a humble though useful servant of the cause, never its Master.

The University of Pennsylvania made him master of Arts, and the legislature voted him the substancial honor of five hundred pounds. In 1776 he served as a volunteer in the army, and was with Washington in his retreat before Howe to the Delaware. To arouse the Spirit of the people and soldiery he commenced the publication of the series of patriotic tracts, *The Crisis*, the first number of which appeared December 19, 1776, and the last on the attainment of peace, April 19, 1783. There were eighteen numbers in all. Number one is now before us as it may have been read to the corporal's guard in the camp eight small octavo pages, in neat pica, and on very dingy paper. Its first stirring sentence is still familiar as a proverb : — « These are the times that try men's souls : the summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis; shrink from the service of his country ; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman.» The rest was as good ; sarcasm for the enemy , eulogy for

Washington, and a picturesque account of the camp scenes in which he had been engaged. After this, as Cheetham remarks: « Paine's pen whas an appendage almost as necessary to the army of independence and as formidable, as its cannon; » and he attributes « much of the brilliant little affair » which in the same month followed at Trenton, to the confidence inspired by this first number. Paine wrote a second on that victory; a third at Philadelphia in April 1777, in which month he was elected by Congress, Secretary to the Committee of Foreign Affairs, a post which he held till 1779, when he was dismissed from the office for a violation of confidence in publishing a delicate statement affecting the loan of gift from France in opposition to the claim of the negotiator Silas Deane. The remaining numbers of the Crisis were occupied, as occasion arose, with war or finance, the encouragement of the army at home, and witty disparagement of the ennemy in America and in Parliament. General Sir William Howe and Lord North were particular objects of his invective. Of the honors paid to the former he says: « There are Knights of various orders, from the Knigth of the wind mill to the Knigth of the post, » and proposes as a final substitute for the Egyptian method of embalming the more frugal American plan: « In a balmage, sir, of humble tar, yon will be as secure as Pharaoh, and in a hieroglyphic of feathers rival in finery all the mummies of Egypt. »

In 1780, Paine was appointed clerk to the Assembly in Pennsylvania. In 1781, he accompanied Col. Laurens in his mission to France, to obtain a loan. They set out in February, and returned in August with two millions and a half of specie. In 1782, he had published at Philadelphia his *Letter to the Abbé Raynal;* a neat production, correcting erroneous statements touching the Revolution, in which he shows his own skill in rhetoric at the expence of the foreign writer.

Paine's services during the war time were properly acknowledged by the government. When Washington was about resigning his commission to Congres, and was at Rocky Hill

in the neighborhood of Princeton, he sent a letter to Paine at Bordentown, acknowledging his services, offering to impress them upon Congress, and inviting him to his table. In 1785, Congress discharged the obligation by a grant of three thousand dollars; Pennsylvania presented him five hundred pounds, and New York conferred upon him a handsome estate at New Rochelle, confiscated from a Royalist, which embraced three hundred acres of land.

In 1787, Paine returned to Europe, carrying with him the model of an iron bridge, which he made some stir with in England. Finding his mother in want, he settled upon her a stated payment for her support. When Burke's Reflections on the French Revolution appeared, he published his reply, the *Rights of Man*, the first part in 1791; the second in 1792. It has been generally acknowledged to be a work of ability. Many of its points of attack upon the British constitution are strongly taken, and held with success. Its views of hereditary kingcraft and of Democratic representations, have passed, in America at least, into truisms. One passage is very felicitous in expression where he is picturing in terms equal to the language of the Great writer whom he is answering, that orator's oversight of the victims of despotism in his poetical commiseration for the fate of its royal perpetrators. « Not one glance of compassion, not one commiserating reflection, that I can find throughout his book, has he bestowed on those who lingered out the most wretched of lives, a life without hope, in the most miserable of prisons. It is painful to behold a man employing his talents to corrupt himself. Nature has been kinder to Mr. Burke than he is to her. He is not affected by the reality of distress touching his heart, but by the showy resemblance of it striking his imagination. He pities the plumage, but forgets the dying bird. Accustomed to kiss the aristocratical hand that hath purloined him from himself, he degenerates into a composition of art, and the genuine soul of nature forsakes him. His hero, or his heroine, must be a tra-

gedy victim expiring in show, and not the real prisoner, of misery sliding into death in the silence of a dungeon. »

A state prosecution was on foot against him when a French deputation called him to France, to sit in Convention for the department of Calais. His reception on his arrival there in 1792 was sufficiently gratifying to his vanity. In the convention, though he voted for the trial of the King, he endeavored to preserve his life by a speech in which he he recommended banishment to America. « Let » said he « the United States be the safeguard and asylum of Louis Capet. There hereafter, far removed from the Miseries and crimes of royalty, he may learn, from the constant aspect of public prosperity, that the true system of Government consists in fair, equal and honorable representation. » He was engaged in Constitution-making with Condorcet. He attracted the ill will of the extreme party, and was arrested and sent to prison by Robespierre, on the plea of being a foreigner, by the same vote which consigned famous Anacharsis Clootz to a dungeon and the guillotine. Paine escaped the latter fate by an accident. He was imprisoned (he writes in one of his letters) on a corridor of the Luxembourg, the door of his room opening outwards. While in this position it was marked, by the officers for its supply of victims. When they came round the door was shut and the mark on the inside; so Paine was not guillotined; and the tyrant falling shorly after, Monroe, the American Ambassador, reclaimed him and took him to his house. His imprisonment lasted eleven Months, from Dec. 1793 to Nov. 1794. Paine, while in prison at Paris corresponded with a lady under the signature of « The Castle in the Air » while she addressed her tetters from « The little Corner of the World. » For reasons which he knew not, their intercourse was suddenly suspended, and for some time he believed his fair friend to be in obscurity and distress. Many years afterwards, however, he met her unexpectedly at Paris, in affluent circumstances, and married to Sir Robert Smith. A first part of Paine's infidel work, *The Age of Reason*

was published while he was in prison. The second part appeared in 1796.

In the same year with the completion of this wretched publication, Paine sent forth in Paris his Letter to George Washington, whom he charged with neglecting to use the influence of Government for his release as an American citizen, and not content with this discussion, depreciated for the lack of qualities which he had expressly attributed to him in his American publications.

Paine gave vent to his feelings in the following epigrammatic direction to the sculptor who should make the Statue of Washington :

> Take from the mine the coldest, hardest stone,
> It needs no fashion, it is Washington;
> But if you chisel, let your strokes be rude,
> And on his breast engrave Ingratitude.

He had now by these writings made enemies of every friend of religion and his country (for patriotism was identical with respect for Washington) and when he returned to America in 1802 it was to fall rapidly in public estimation, with the additional incumbrance of the personal neglect and vices of intemperance and avarice into which he fell in his old age. That the former had anticipated his return to America it proved by the Paris correspondence of Gouverneur Morris, who writes him June 25, 1793, as « a little more drunk than usual » and the following year, March 6, « in the best of times he had a larger share of every other sense than of common sense, and lately the intemperate use of ardent spirit has, I am told, considerably impaired the small stock which he originally possessed. »

He visited Jefferson, at Washington, who remembering, his early position, had agreed to his request to bring him home in a national vessel; but the most ardent political reminiscences could not compensate for Paine's personal habits, and the popular contempt into which he had fallen. His friend and biographer Rickman takes Barlow to task for

omitting any mention of him among the heroes of the American war in the Columbiad, and proposes to give him a snug place between Washington and Franklin in the fifth book of that poem. His last days at New Rochelle and New York have been ruthlessly brought to the gaze of the world by his American biographer, Cheetham, who sometimes forgets the decencies due even to drunkenness, and always to old age.

Cheetham's revised private copy of the Life of Paine is in the New York Historical Society: the corrections in his own handwriting and intended for a second edition. In the preliminary address to Clinton, the strong animadversions on the despotism of Jefferson's democracy, and his fears of the duration of the Republic, are omitted. The style is generally improved by slight verbal alterations. In the description of his first interview with Paine in the Preface, the comparison of the philosopher's nose to Bardolph's, as described by Falstaff, is stricken out. Cheetham was an English radical from Manchester, who edited in New York the *American Citizen* holding a trenchant pen for a news-paper. At first he was the friend of Paine. Paine has had numerous biographer's, including Francis Oldys, a fictitious name on a partisan pamphlet, written by the refugee loyalist, the author of the Political Annals, George Chalmers. Paine's name is spelt Pain throughout this production. There is a volume of Memoirs, by W. T. Sherwing, London, 1819; by Thomas Clio Rickman, of the same date; and a later volume by G. Vale, New York, 1841.

Paine's vanity was wounded by the neglect into which he had fallen; his early habits of neatness, when he was painted by Romney, and « looked altogether like a gentleman of the old French School, » could not be detected in the filth into which he had fallen. His intemperance was notorious. His treatment of Madame Bonneville, whom he had induced to follow him from Paris not without scandal, was cruel. He was arraigned in court for a petty debt, and exposed by his servants: one of whom is said to have at-

tempted his life in revenge for his ill treatment. Jarvis, the painter, tolerated his presence in his bachelor's quarters, and has left us a melancholy memorial of his appearance in the plaster bust which is preserved in the rooms of the New York Historical Society. While the artist was at work upon it, he exclaimed, « I shall secure him to a nicety, if I am so fortunate as to get plaster enough for his carbuncled nose. »

In Francis's Reminiscences of Printers, Authors, etc., there was an old couplet sung by the boys in the Street. —

> Tom Paine is come from far. from far,
> His nose is like a blazing star !

Paine would lodge at different places about town as opportunity served, his habits rendering frequent changes of lodging inevitable. One of his tenements, in not the most agreeable locality, he shared with a show of wild beasts. Death approaching, he desired, in recollection of his Quaker parentage to be interred in the cemetery of that body, but this consolation was refused him, a circumstance which is said to have affected him deeply. In his closing days he was visited by clergymen and others to convert him from his irreligion or testify to his infidelity. He died quietly in New York, June 8, 1809. His remains were taken to New Rochelle where he was interred on his farm, with an inscription on a stone « Thomas Paine, Author of Common Sense. » In 1819, ten years afterwards, when Cobbett wished to create a sensation, he absurdly rifled the grave of the bones which he carried to England.

The merit of Paine's style as a prose writer is very great. He had the art of saying a familiar thing in a familiar way, and at the same time imparting to it great spirit and freshness. He could sometimes introduce an apposite story almost as well as Franklin. His wit was ready, and generally pungent enough. After his return to America in 1802, he writes, « Some of John Adams loyal subjects, I see, have been to present him with an address on his birth-

day, but the language they use is too tame for the occasion. Birth-day addresses like birth day odes, should not creep along like drops of dew down a cabbage leaf, but roll in a torrent of poetical metaphore. » (Second letter to the Citizen of the U. S. Nov. 19, 1802 in the Nat. Intell.). To Franklin's sayings, « Where liberty is, there is my country » his retort was « Where liberty is not, there is my country. » A minister of a new sect came to him to explain the Scriptures, asserting that the key had been lost these four thousand, years, and they had found it. « It must have been very rusty, then, » was his reply. Some of his sentences are felicious as Sheridan's for neatness and point. Thus in his letter to the Earl of Shelburne, of the loss of reputation: « There are cases in which it is as impossible to restore character to life, as it is to recover the dead. It is a phoenix that can expire but once, and from whose ashes there is no resurrection; » and to the same nobleman on obedience to outlandish authority: « For a thousand reasons England would be the last country to yield it to. She has been treacherous, and we know it. Her character is gone, and we have seen the funeral. » To the Abbé Raynal he says holding Britain to account of keeping the world in disturbance and war: « Is life so very long that it is necessary, nay even a duty, to shake the sand and hasten out the period of duration? » « Science » he says, « the partisan of no country, but the benevolent patroness of all, has liberally opened a temple where all may meet. The philosopher of one country sees not an enemy in the philosopher of another: he takes his seat in the temple of science and asks not who sits beside him. » Literature he calls « the tongue of the world. »

« War » he says in the Rights of Man, « is the Pharo table of governments, and nations the dupes of the game. » It was this word and a blow, this powerful expression in ordinary symbols, which gained Paine the ear of the public during the Revolutionary war. His phrases put American resistance in an incontrovertible form. Paine's slight claims as a poet

depend, upon a few showy pieces, more remarkable for their collocation of fine words than just thought or expression. He had fancy, but wanted poetic feeling.

In another light the study of Paine's character may be of importance to the world, in showing that a certain degree of ready tact and ability, and a certain amount of benevolence, may consist with the utter absence of the higher philosophical and moral qualities. Paine had a great deal of wit and sagacity, but their exercise was confined to a narrow field. When he undertook his attack upon the Christian religion, it was vithout the learning, the thought, or the feeling requisite for its study. It is much to ask us to believe that he was sustained by any better motive than vanity. Notwithstanding his experience of the French Revolution in the cell of the Luxenbourg, he could not relinquish the egotism, and self-sufficiency productive of the excesses which had placed him there. Suffering from lawlessness, he was vain and empty enough to seek to inflict that curse upon the world in its most important relations. The *Age of reason* is justly treated with contempt, but it points a most significant moral of the worthlessness of the shallow powers of the understanding divorced from the control of the higher faculties of the soul. « It must soon sink into infamy, » said William Linn, from the pulpit, who had commended Paine's Political writings in the same place, and « carry his own name along with it. There is nothing new in the performance, save the bold and indecent manner. Indeed it is provoking to see the Christian religion, after having withstood the roaring of the lion, insulted by the braying of the ass. » *

The prophecy has been verified, and under the odium into which he cast himself few readers of the present day are familiar with the brilliant qualities which once excited those generations.

---

* Linn's Discourse, Fall of Antichrist. Series « Signs of the Times », 1794, includes the following epigram:

> Here lies Tom Paine, who wrote in liberty's defence,
> But in his « Age of reason » lost his « Common Sense ».

VI.

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

The author of the Declaration of Independence was born on his father's estate at Shadwell, Albermarle county, Virginia, in the neighborhood of Monticello, April 2, 1743. On the father's side his ancestry was Welsh, « from near the mountain of Snowdon » he notices in his Autobiography, and adds, « the highest in Great Britain. » His grandfather, who was settled in Virginia left three sons of whom the youngest, Peter, married Jane Randolph of Goochland in the state, and of Scottish descent. Of eight children by this Marriage Thomas was the first born. The father was a man of « a strong mind and sound judgment, and eager after information » as his son afterwards described him, whose neglected education in youth did not prevent his accomplishing himself sufficiently to be employed on a boundary survey between Virginia and Nort Carolina, and making the first actual map of the state on record. He died when his son was in his fifteenth year, having placed him on the track of a liberal education — under the instruction of Mr. Douglass, a clergyman from Scotland, who taught him French with the elements of Greek and Latin. On the death of his father he was educated by the Reverend Mr. Maury, « a correct classical Scholar, » for two years, when

in 1760 he entered William and Mary College, where he also remained two years. At the college his intellectual habits were greatly formed by lectures and personal friendships of Dr. William Small, the Professor of Philosophy, from Scotland, a man of an active and liberal mind, who had a happy art of communicating his information of science, ethic, and the belles-lettres. « This acquaintanceship, » sais Jefferson, looking back to these early years, when he commenced his Autobiography at the age of seventy-seven, « was my great good fortune and probably fixed the destinies of my life. » The Professor introduced him to George Wythe, the able lawyer and patriot, with whom he studied law. The Autobiography recalls the *partie carrée* which these three friends formed in company with Governor Fauquier at his table, where conversation never lacked intelligence. Small returned to Scotland in 1762.

Jefferson has left the warmest acknowledgment in his Correspondence and autobiography, of his obligations to Wythe, who led him into business at the bar, and lived for forty years his friend.

In his notes for a biography of Wythe, prepared in 1820, Jefferson thus draws his character. « No man ever left behind him a character more venerated than George Wythe. His virtue was of the purest tint; his integrity inflexible and his justice exact; of warm patriotism, and devoted as he was to liberty, and the natural and equal rights of man, he might truly be called the Cato of his country, without the avarice of the Roman; for a more disinterested person never lived. Temperance and regularity in all his habits gave him general good health, and his unaffected modesty and suavity of manners endeared him to every one. He was of easy elocution, his language chaste, methodical in the arrangement of his matter, learned and logical in the use of it, and of great urbanity in debate; not quick of apprehension, but with a little time, profound in penetration and sound conclusion. In his philosophy he was firm, and neither troubling, nor perhaps trust-

ing, anyone with his religious creed, he left the world to the conclusion, that that religion must be good which could produce a life of exemplary virtue. His stature was of the middle size, well formed and proportioned, and the features of his face were manly, comely, and engaging. Such was George Wythe, the honor of his own, and the model of future times. »

At the age of twenty-six, Jefferson entered public life as member of the legislature from his native county. In 1772 he married a widow lady of the age of twenty-three, the daughter of John Wayles, a lawyer of position and attractive personal qualities, a share of whose property on his death in 1773, doubled the fortunes of the pair. Jefferson has inherited from his father the land on which he was born, and the adjacent grounds of Monticello.

His early opposition to the British colonial policy is well known. The details belong to political rather than literary history. His views on the position of the country were expressed in a draft of instructions which he prepared for delegates to a general Congress, to be sent from the Convention at Williamsburg, in 1774. The paper was read by the members, and not brought up to he adopted, but it was published in a pamphlet form with the title *A Summary View of the Rights of British America.* Edmund Burke, when it reached London, interpolated some passages in it, in which form it passed through several editions. (Autobiography, Works, I. 7. Ed. 1830).

In 1775 Jefferson succeeded Peyton Randolph in his seat in Congress at Philadelphia. He was thirty two years of age, and the youngest man but one in that body. He was immediately engaged in its affairs, his legal and literary abilities * being called for to assist the committee to prepare a

---

* « Mr. Jefferson came into Congress in June, 1775, and brought with him a reputation for literature, science, and a happy talent of composition. Writings of his were handed about, remarkable for the peculiar felicity of expression. » — John Adam's Letters to Timothy Pickering, Aug. 6, 1822.

declaration of the causes of taking up arms. The draft which Jefferson prepared was too ardent for his colleague, Dickinson, and the latter substituted a statement in milder form. When the consideration of the question of Independence arose, Jefferson was appointed chairman of the Committee of Adams, Franklin, Sherman, and Livingston, to prepare a Declaration. « The Committee » he says, in his Autobiography, « desired me to do it : it was accordingly done. » A few verbal corrections appear in the fac-simile of the original draft in the handwriting of Franklin and Adams. The paper was reported on Friday, 28th June, 1776, laid on the table, and on Monday referred to a committee of the whole, discussed for the three following days, abridged of several superfluous phrases and some passages bearing severely upon Great Britain and affecting the question of Slavery. On the evening of the memorable Fourth it was adopted in its present form.

A discussion has arisen with respect to the authorship of several striking phrases of this document, alleged to have been anticipated by the Mecklenburg North Carolina Resolutions of May 20, 1775. In the last mentioned paper the following language occurs : « That we citizens of Mecklenburg county, do hereby *dissolve the political bands* which have connected us with the mother country, and hereby absolve ourselves from all allegiance to the British crown, and abjure all political connection, contract, or association with that nation. *** That we do hereby declare ourselves a *free and independent* people; are, and of right ought to be, a sovereign and self governing association, under the control of no person, other than that of our God, and the general government of Congress; to the maintenance of which independence, we solemnly *pledge to each other*, our mutual co-operation, *our lives*, *our fortunes*, *and our most sacred honor.* » The lines which we have marked in italics suggest plagiarism from one quarter or the other. The comparison between the two was brought up in a letter from John Adams to Mr. Jefferson, dated June, 1819. Jefferson in reply, at the age of seventy-

six, when he may have forgotten the contemporary report of the affair, doubted the authenticity of the paper. The fact of the declaration at Mecklemburg and the words of the Resolutions were maintained afterwards by a report of the legislature of North Carolina, which investigated the evidence. Professor Tucker, in his Life of Jefferson, published in 1837, admits the agreement and the plagiarism lying between the two, and does not question the fact that a declaration was made at Mecklenburg, but argues that the Jeffersonian phrases were interpolated subsequently from the Declaration of Congress. *

But whatever coincidences of expression may be noticed by the curious students of such matters, in the language of Webster on the solemn occasion of the funeral eulogy of Adams and Jefferson, « as a composition, the Declaration is Mr. Jefferson's. It is the production of his mind, and the high honor of it belongs to him, clearly and absolutely. To say that he performed his work well would be doing him injustice. To say that he did excellently well, admirably well, would be inadequate and halting praise. Let us rather say, that he so discharged the duty assigned him, that all Americans may well rejoice that the work of drawing the title-deed of their liberties devolved upon him. » — Works, Vol. I. 126.

Leaving Congress in September after the Declaration, Jefferson's faculties were employed in legal reforms in the legislature of his state of which he became Governor in 1779, retaining the office till 1781, when he resigned it, thinking a man of military education was required for the conduct of affairs. He was offered several foreign appointments, to negotiate treaties in Europe, and finally embarked from Boston in 1784, to join Franklin and Adams in Paris for theis

---

* Art. on Tucker's Life of Jefferson, New York Review, No I, march, 1837. The Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence, a lecture by the Rev. Francis L. Hawks before the N. J. Historical Society, Dec. 16, 1852.

purpose. When Adams was appointed minister to London, and Franklin returned home in 1785, Jefferson was left minister in Paris. He remained in that situation, travelling in France and visiting Holland and Piedmont till 1789, when he returned to America. On his arrival in Virginia he was met by the appointment from Washington of Secretary of State, which office he entered upon in New York, retaining it till the close of 1793. He then passed three years in retirement, from which the Vice-Presidency withdrew him, succeded at the end of the term in 1801 by his election to the Presidency. After eight years, he retired to Monticello for the remainder of his career, and lived the life of a planter and student. His interest in education led him to be appointed chairman of the commission which formed the University at Charlottesville, in his vicinity, of which he became the rector.

In 1815, his pecuniary circumstances having become straitened, he sold his library of about seven thousand volumes to Congress, for which he received twenty three thousand dollars. It was arranged by him on the Baconian plan of a division under Memory, Reason or Judgment, and the Imagination. The departments showed a liberal range of study on Science and Literature including an allowance of the Fine Arts. The fire in the Library Room in 1852 destroyed most of these books.

Jefferson's last days were passed in the rural enjoyments of Monticello, and with unimpaired mental pleasures. He died on the fourth of July, 1826, on the completion of fifty years from the Declaration of Independence.

Jefferson's popular literary reputation will mainly rest on the stirring sentences of this Declaration. There in abundant material in the nine octavo volumes of his writings, but little of it is coined for current circulation. (This is the new edition edited by H. A. Washington, prepared from the MS. bequeathed to Thomas Jefferson Randolph, his grandson, and purchased by Congress in 1848). The Autobiography,

written in extreme age, has nothing of the repose and relish of Franklin's; the reports, messages, and other political writings, may be sometimes referred to, but will seldom be perused; while the Correspondence, when perfectly arranged and annotated, will remain the best and most agreeable picture of the man.

The *Notes on the state of Virginia* were written at the suggestion of M. Marbois of the French Legation in Philadelphia, who in 1781, in accordance with the wishes of his government for information, proposed to Jefferson a set of queries. As the latter had always been in the habit of jotting down memoranda of statistical and useful matters relating to the country, he took this opportunity of arranging them in order. Copies were in request among the author's friends, and for their satisfaction the work was privately printed, an edition of two hundred copies in Paris, in 1784, and distributed both in Europe and America. One of the European copies, on the death of his owner, was obtained by a bookseller, who had it bunglingly translated by the Abbé Morellet into French, the author hearing of it in time to make some corrections and changes, when it appeared — *Observations sur la Virginie par M. J***, traduites de l'Anglois*, 8vo. Paris 1786. The next year Jefferson gave the original to an English publisher.

The correspondence of Jefferson, as published by his grandson, contains the finest specimens of his literary powers. Many of the letters are written with a care that smells of the lamp. There is scarcely one of them which does not contain something suggestive or useful. During his residence in France he was very industrious as a correspondent, and his letters on the political affairs of the country, during the early period of the Revolution, addressed to Washington, Jay, and others, are valuable for their observation and sagacity. Madison is his chosen correspondent on American political ideas. He addresses John Adams on state affairs in France, and when they both become veterans, in retirement from

public life, Braintree and Monticello exchange notes on topics of ethics and religion. He interests himself while in Europe, in all the liberal pursuits of his friends. He writes to Rittenhouse on points raised in the *Notes* on *Virginia;* to Francis Hopkinson concerning his musical improvements and inventions, and asks (in 1786) « what is become of the lunarium for the king ? » He is solicitous for Houdon the sculptor, Tom Paine's iron bridge and its mathematical principles, the ethnological promises of Ledyard's travels, his friend Buffon's Museum, that it be furnished with American specimens, and cheerfully fills the duties of a Paris commissioner in supplying the libraries of his friends at home with foreign books. His letters to his nephew Peter Carr show the warmth of his family attachments, and his zealous study of the nature of a practical education for mind and body ; and the politician and philosopher can gaily unbend from graver studies to compliment his lady correspondents with his refinements of expression. To Mrs. Cosway he addresses the fine dialogue between Head and Heart on American nature, and discourses very gracefully to Mrs. Bingham on the fopperies of Parisian life.

In 1787, on the 28th February, suffering from a dislocate wrist, Jefferson set out by advice of his physician, on a tour to the mineral waters of Aix. By the time he returned to Paris, in June, he had passed through the heart of the country, and traversed the boundaries of France on the south and west, advancing in Italy along the Mediterranean as far as Genoa. He was greatly impressed with the architecture of that noble relic of antiquity, the *Maison Quarrée at Nismes.* He writes to Madame la Comtesse de Tesse, on the beauties of a statue; to La Fayette, calling upon him to make the same journey, — « and to do it most effectually, you must be absolutely *incognito*, you must ferret the people out of their hovels as I have done, look into their kettles, eat their bread, loll on their beds, under pretence of resting yourself, but in fact to find if they are soft. You will feel a sublime

pleasure in the course of the investigation, and a sublimer one hereafter, when you shall be able to apply your knowledge to the softening of their beds, or the throwing a morcel of meat into their kettle of vegetables. » His memoranda apply to the wines of Burgundy, the agriculture and labor of the Rhone districts, the mode of living of the peasantry, the agricultural improvements; — the itinerary of a useful, intelligent, and active - minded tourist. Approaching the close of life, in 1816, he writes to John Adams — « You ask, if I would agree to live my seventy or rather seventy-three years over again? To which I say, yea. I think with you, that it is a good world on the whole; that it has been framed on a principle of benevolence, and more pleasure than pain dealt out to us. *** My temperament is sanguine. I steer my bark with Hope in the head, leaving, Fear astern. My hopes, indeed, sometimes fail; but not oftener than the forebodings of the gloomy. »

This was the cheerful close of a life of activity. His intellectual habits were those which wear well; keen, subtle, sagacious in thinking and acting as a politician, he was neat in composition skilful in statement, curious and philosophical in speculation. Quick, active, versatile, he exercised the ingenuity of a man of talent, rather than the inconscious instinct of a man of genius. His mind was clear on objects which admitted of being presented in a transparent light and profound on material issues. Politics he made an art, and was sensitive to every fibre of the web of political intrigue. He was not an orator or a great debater, but a good talker, an artful writer, master of that cunning instrument — the pen — and an adept in personal management. In politics and philosophy what force he employed was rectilinear and progressive. His writings lack weight for the man of deep thought or feeling. They are agreeable studies for the philosophical amateur, and profitable ones for the politician who follows out in action his far-sighted speculations.

VII.

PHILIP FRENEAU.

Freneau, the popular political versifier of the days of the Revolution, the newspaper advocate of the republican party afterwards, and a true poet in his best moments, was born in New York, in Frankfort street, Jan. 2, 1752, of a family which had emigrated from France on the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. His ancestors had been among the founders of the St. Esprit Church, in Pine Street, New York. The house from which his grandfather was buried was formerly pointed out in Hanover Square. In 1771, we find Philip Freneau a graduate of the college of New Jersey, in the same class with Madison, the future President, with whom he was on terms of close intimacy, and associated with Brackenbridge in the composition and delivery of a Commencement poem on the *Rising Glory of America*, Freneau's portion of which is included in two of the editions of his writings. It is animated and vigorous in description and sentiment. A line in his picture of a supposed settlement of the western continent by a stray ship of the Carthaginians, is poetic:

> In the course of long revolving years
> A numerous progeny from these arose,
> And spread throughout the coasts – those whom we call
> Brazilians, Mexicans, Peruvians rich,
> The tribes of Chili, Patagon, and those
> *Who till the shores of Amazon's long stream.*

There is a pleasing sketch of rural life in this production, with other proof that though a youthful poem, it contained something more than the required declamation for the hour.

We next hear of Freneau as a victim in the fortunes of the Revolution. He was taken prisoner by the British, and condemned to the barbarities of the prison ship at New York, a treatment which he did not forget in his *Cantos from a Prison - Ship.* These are dated in 1780, and celebrate his capture on the coast of Delaware, in a vessel, gallantly described, in which he was sailing to St. Eustatia, by a British frigate, which carried him to New York. * Here he speedily made the intimate acquaintance of the *Scorpion*, moored on te Hudson, whose « mountain stream » sent no cooling breath to the victims in their ghastly dungeons.

> O'er distant streams appears the dewy green,
> And leafy trees on mountain tops are seen,
> But they no groves nor grassy mountains tread,
> Mark'd for a longer journey to the dead.

On the opposite side of the island was stationed the *Hunter* Hospital Ship « a slaughter house, yet hospital in name », where a Hessian doctor, remarkable for his stupidity, visited the fever-stricken prisoners.

> Some with his pills he sent to Pluto's reign,
> And some he blister 'd with his flies of Spain,
> . . . . . .
> On our lost comrades built his future fame,
> And scatter 'd fate where 'er his footsteps came.

When the merciful angel death came, the prisoners were buried on the shore, and the poet invokes the tenderness of

---

* *The British Prison-Ship.* a Poem in four Cantos. Canto 1. The Capture. 2. The Prison-Ship. 3. The Prison-Ship continued. 4. The Hospital Prison-Ship—to which is added a Poem on the death of Capt. N. Biddle. Phila, F. Bailey. 1781.

posterity for their graves, an appeal not now out of place, when « sapient trouble-tombs » would remove the fine monument erecting in memory of these things on Broadway, in the grave-yard of Trinity, where others of these unfortunates lie buried.

> When to your arms these fatal islands fall
> (For first, or last, they must be conquer 'd all)
> Americans ! to rites sepulchral just,
> With gentlest footstep press this Kindred dust,
> And o'er the tombs, if tombs can then be found,
> Place the green turf, and plant the myrtle round.

Some of Freneau's poems, according to the title page of the octavo edition, which he printed at Monmouth, N. J., were written as early as 1768, when he was in his seventeenth year. *The Poetical History of the Prophet Jonah* written with property and spirit, and the humorous tale of *The Village Merchant*, bear that date. At what time and in what way Freneau escaped from the prison-ship we are not informed; but we may gather some of his subsequent movements from the dates of his poems and essays.

His prose sketches, *The Philosopher of the Forest*, were first printed in the *Freeman's Journal* of Philadelphia, in November, 1781.

In 1782, he pens at Philadelphia *A Discourse on Esquires, with a short Narrative of his Honor the President of the Debtors' Club*, one of his prose essays. In 1784 we have *Lines Written at Port Royal, in the Island of Jamaica* and the next year some verses, *The Departure*, in which he takes leave of the Hudson for a sea voyage, from which we may infer that he had already some pretensions to the title of Captain, by which he was generally known in his later days. *His Journey from Philadelphia to New York by way of Burlington and South Amboy*, written in verse shows an intimate acquaintance with nautical slang. His *New Year's Verses, written for the Carriers of the Columbian Herald,* are dated Charles-

ton, Jan., 1786. At one time Philip Freneau commanded a vessel sailing out of that port.

The first edition of Freneau's poems was in Philadelphia in 1786, *The Poems of Philip Freneau, written chiefly during the late War.* It is very neatly printed, in a single duodecimo volume. In 1788, a second volume followed, The Miscellaneous Works of Mr. Philip Freneau, containing his *Essays and Additional Poems.* Philadelphia, printed by Francis Bailey, at Yorick 's Head, in Market Street, a neat duodecimo volume of 429 pages with an advertisement from the printer : — « The following essays and poems selected from some printed and manuscript papers of Mr. Freneau , are now presented to the public of the United States, in hopes they will prove at least equally acceptable with his volume of poems published last year.. Some few of the pieces in this volume have heretofore appeared in American Newspapers; but through a fatality not unusually attending publications of that kind, are now, perhaps forgotten ; and at any time, may possibly never have been seen, or attended to, but by very few. » This is the only volume of Freneau's writings, in book form, which contains any of his prose compositions. It was published, as usual in those days even for small duodecimo volumes, by subscription. De Witt Clinton takes a copy in New York, and John Pintard subscribes for two. Some of Freneau 's best pieces are in this volume : — *The pictures of Columbus, The Indian Student, The Indian Burying Ground, The Man of Ninety,* and that delicate little poem *May to April.*

The prose essays are pleasant papers. They are at once simple and elegant in style, independent in thought, playful and humorous. They were for the most part written with the signature of Robert Slender, whom the author took the liberty of burying, that he might publish his manuscripts. The *Advice to Authors,* with which they open, is with its playful irony, a fresh, manly essay. These miscellaneous essays are all clever productions. They are grouped in several little collections,

Tracts and Essays on several subjects, by Mr. Slender; Essays, Tales and Poems, by Mr. Slender; The Philosopher of the Forest. They embrace the usual repertory of the essayist, in description, apologue, and gentle satire. One of these time-honored inventions consecrated by Voltaire and Goldsmith, in an account of the *Voyage of Timberoo-tabo-cede, an Otaheite Indian*, who visits foreign countries at the command of his sovereign, and reparts on their absurdities on his return. A paragraph will show its spirit, a corrective for hasty observation, which may still be of service to ethnologists: — « During the time of eating, we were encircled by a number of black people of both sexes who had green branches in their hands, which we at first supposed were emblematical of peace and friendship, but as we soon after discovered, were only meant to brush away the flies from our victuals. »

The Third publication of Freneau's writings was made by himself at his press at Monmouth, New Jersey, in 1795 and is much the most complete collection. It is an octavo volume of four hundred and fifty-six pages, and contains nearly three hundred articles in verse, in most of the popular forms of composition, of description, tale, satire, song and epigram.

The next edition of the Poems, a revision of the whole, was issued by subscription, in two volumes, in Philadelphia, in 1809. This contained two translations from Ovid and Lucretius. An author's advertisement appeals to the public on patriotic grounds. The collection has been mostly restricted to « Poems that arose from the incidents of the American revolutionary contest, down to the date of 1793. These were intended, in part to expose to vice and treason, their own hideous deformity; to depict virtue, honour, and patriotism in their native beauty. To his countrymen, the real Patriotic Americans, the Revolutionary Republicans, and the rising generation who are attached to their sentiments and principles, the writer hopes this collection will not prove unacceptable. » In 1815, a fifth publication appeared, from the press of Longworth of New York, in two duodecimo volumes, *A Col-*

lection of Poems, on American Affairs and, a variety of other subjects, chiefly Moral and Political; written between the year 1797 and the present time. The title-page appeals to the war feeling of the period.

> Then England comes ! — a sense of wrong requires
> To meet with thirteen stars your thousand fires :
> Through these stern times the conflict to maintain,
> Or drown them, with your commerce in the main.

The contents show that Freneau had lost nothing of his national ardor with age. He is still sensitive to the feelings of the times, and celebrates most passing themes, from the death of a Russian Empress to the rebuilding of Nassau Hall, and the city encroachments on the Hudson River. The military events of the war are his special care, as he devotes himself to the denunciation of the foe and the encouragement of his countrymen, frequently mingling with his higher themes the humorous incidents of the camp.

A large portion of Freneau's occupations must be looked for in his employments upon the press.

In 1791 Freneau edited the *National Gazette*, in Philadelphia, a journal supported in opposition to *Fenno's Gazette*, under the alleged influence of Hamilton. At the same time, Jefferson, then secretary of State, gave him a post in his office, of translating clerk. Hamilton did not relish the attacks of Freneau in his paper, which he described as « intemperately devoted to the abuse of the government, and all the conspicuous actors in it, except the Secretary of State and his coadjutors, who were the constant theme of its panegyric, » and commented strongly upon the impropriety of Jefferson's official support of the editor, in a series of political assaults, signed An American, and contributed to the Gazette of the United States, in August, 1792. The articles are published in the Hamilton Correspondence. From these it appears that « Mr. Freneau, before he came to Philadelphia to cunduct the *National Gazette*, was employed by Childs & Sprague, printers

of the *Daily Advertiser* in New York, in the capacity of editor or Superintendant, » and that the first number of the *National Gazette* appeared under his direction Oct. 31, 1791. The *New York Daily Advertiser* of oct. 26 had the announcement: « We hear from Philadelphia that the Hon. Thomas Jefferson, Esq., Secretary of State for the United States, had appointed Captain Philip Freneau interpreter of the French language for the Department of State. » On these facts, and some hearsay evidence, which failed to be substanciated, Hamilton made his charge upon Jefferson of controlling the paper, and using the patronage of his office for the support of its editor. Jefferson in a letter to Washington, dated Sept. 9, 1792, disposes of this matter. While the government, says he, was at New York, he was appealed to on behalf of Freneau, to know whether there was any place within his department to which he could be appointed. There was no vacancy, but when the removal to Philadelphia took place, Mr Pintard, the translating clerk, did not choose to follow, so Freneau succeded him, with a salary of two hundred and fifty dollars per annum. As for the connection with the paper, Jefferson said he gave Freneau the preference for the office « as a man of genius » as he had recommended Rittenhouse, Barlow, and others, to Washington; that he was anxious that the material parts of the *Leyden Gazette* should be republished; and as Freneau's newspaper arrangements offered facilities for the publication, he gave them to him; that he had procured subscriptions for his paper, and in advance, but that he had never written or dictated, or been instrumental in furnishing a line for the journal. (Hamilton's works, IV, 300).

On occasion of the great entertainment given to Genet, in Philadelphia, in 1793 after his mutilated reception by the President, citizen Freneau was present, and was requested to translate the French ode written by Duponceau, the singing of which was one of the items of this extraordinary festivity. Freneau was a great advocate of France through this period, and annoyed Washington by his assaults on the administra-

tion. There was « that rascal Freneau » said he, « sent him three of his papers every day, as if he would become the distributor of them, an act in which he could see nothing but an impudent design to insult him. »

May 23, 1793, « Washington adverted to a piece of Freneau's paper of yesterday. His paper has saved our constitution, which was galloping fast into monarchy, and has been checked by no means so powerfully as by that paper. It is well and universally known that it has been that paper which has checked the career of the monocrats. » — Jefferson's Ana, Works IV, 485, 491, Ed. 1830.

A series of Probationary Odes, by Jonathan Pindar, Esq., a cousin of Peter's, and candidate for the post, of Poet Laureat, published in the Gazette for 1793, were probably written by Freneau. Adams, Knox, Hamilton, and others, are satirized. There are seven stanzas of advice « to a truly Great Man, » George Washington, touching the establishment of banks.

They begin :

George, on thy virtues often have I dwelt;
And still the theme is grateful to mine ear;
Thy gold set chemists ten times over melt,
From dross and base alloy they'll find it clear.
&c. &c.

The following were verses on John Adams :

TO A WOULD-BE GREAT MAN

Daddy Vice, Daddy Vice,
One may see in a trice
The drift on your fine publication;
&c. &c.

The Gazette was published till the conclusion of a second volume and the second year, October 26, 1793.

Freneau had a genius for newspapers. At his own press at Mount Pleasant, near Middletown Point, May, 2, 1795, « And on American Independence XIX, » as he adds, he

published the first number of his *Jersey Chronicle*, on eight small quarto pages of the precise size of seven inches by eight. His address « to the Public » is, as usual very neat, — commencing with a motto from Horace, in reference to his rural press. — « Intersylvas Academi quaerere verum » and this announcement of the design : — « the editor in the publication of this paper proposes, among other objects, to present his readers with a complete history of the foreign and domestic events of the times, together with such essays, remarks and observations as shall tend to illustrate the politics or mark the general character of the age, and country in which we live » The paper is dated « Mount-Pleasant, near Middletown Point : — printed by P. Freneau — by whom Advertisements, Hand Bills, ec., are done at the shortest notice, and on the most reasonable terms. » With the third number it grew in dimensions, and extended to a third column in width. To the foreign affairs and « American advices » were added the essays entitled *Tomo Cheeki* and an occasional poem — the Republican Genius of Europe, the Rival Suitors for America. Apropos to the national anniversary of 1795 at Monmouth, he published one of the English songs of the day, this

HYMN TO LIBERTY

God save the rights of man !
Give us a heart to scan
Blessings so dear :
&c. &c.

About the same time he announces the edition of his poems of 1795, which he published at the same press. With the fifty-second number at the close of the year, April 30, 1796, Freneau winds up the paper with a notice « to subscribers stating that

in number one of the Jersey Chronicle the Editor announced his intention of extending the publication beyond the first year, pro-

vided the attempt should in the meantime be suitably encouraged and found practicable. But the necessary number of subscribers having not yet appeared, scarcely to defray the expenses of the undertaking, notwithstanding the very low rate (it was published at twelve shillings per annum) at which it has been offered, the editor with some regret declined a further prosecution of his plan at this time. He embraces the present opportunity to return his sincere thanks to such persons in this and the neighboring counties as have favored him with their subscriptions; and have also by their punctuality in complying with the terms originally proposed thus far enabled him to issue a free independent and republican paper.

It is from some such printing-office as that which sent forth his Jersey Chronicle that we may fancy Freneau inditing his poem of the Country Printer, a purely American description of the village and associations of the place: the arrival of the old-time coach, the odd farrago of the editor's page, the office itself: —

> Here lie the types, in curious order rang'd,
> Ready alike to imprint your prose or verse;
> Ready to speak, their order only chang'd,
> Creek-Indian lingo, Dutch or Highland Erse;
> These types have printed Erskine's *Gospel Treat*
> Tom Durefey's songs, and Bunian's works, complete:

and the editor, himself, — with something more than a suggestion of Philip Freneau. The change from the State House to Saratoga which we quote is a powerful thrust of satire.

> He, in his time, the patriot of his town,
> With press and pen attack'd the royal side,
> &c. &c.

Freneau was probably at all time busy, more or less with the newspapers. His next important venture of this kind was of a literary character at New York.

The first number of his *Time-Piece and Literary Companion* was issued at New York, March 13, 1797. It was printed three times a week — on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

mornings, in a neat folio form, paged, at the price of thirty shillings, New York currency, per annum. Its editor seems to have formed a partnership in the printing business, for the purpose of its publication. « In order, » he says « to render this work the more interesting and acceptable to the public at large, in regard to neatness and elegance of mechanical execution, the subscriber informs all who have or may favor him with their names, that he has associated himself as a partner in the typographical line of business with Mr. Alexander Menut, of that profession, some time since from Canada, and who is become, and means to continue, a citizen of the United States. » The proposals signed by Freneau announce the new paper as « intended for the diffusion of useful as well as ornamental knowledge, news, and liberal amusement in general, » and its editor pledged himself to use his best endeavors to render the *Time-Piece and Literary Companion*, « a work of merit, as far as his exertions or abilities will permit, worthy the patronage of the public. » The promise was well fulfilled during the year or more of Freneau's editorship. Sept. 15, 1797, with the beginning of the second volume, the name of M. L. Davis appears associated with Freneau as the publisher, when the notice of the printer's partnership with Menut is dropped, Freneau and Davis appear at the head of the paper till No. 81, March 21, 1798 when the publishers are changed to M. L. Davis & Co.; and with No. 118, June 15, 1798, R. Saunders appears for the proprietors. Saunders disappears with No. 128, July 9 of the same year, and the paper is published for the proprietors at 25 Maiden Lane, at least till No. 150, Aug. 30, 1798, where the file closes in the rare volume preserved in the New York Historical Society. The evidence of Freneau's ability had departed from its columns some time before. For a long time, However, it was admirably sustained by Freneau, whose tact at administering to the tastes of the public was shown in the skill of the selection and the general elegance of the material. There were news of the day carefully digested, biographies, correspondences, anecdotes, and occasional poems *ad libitum*.

In the second number he commences a translation of the travels of M. Abbé Robin, « Chaplain in Count Rochambeau's army, giving a general account of the progress of the French army from Rhode Island, the place of their landing, to Yorktown in Virginia; and of some other occurrences. » This, we are told, he had made fourteen years before; but as a small edition was printed off, the work is now in the hands of very few. It was printed at Philadelphia in 1783.

Freneau also published his series of *Tomo Cheeki, the Creek Indian in Philadelphia*, with this preliminary notice: « A number of eccentric writings under this title, and to the amount of a considerable volume, are in the hands of the editor of the *Time-Piece*, said to be translated from one of the Indian Languages of this country. They were transmitted to him more than two years ago, and a few numbers published in a gazette, edited by him in a neighbouring state; but discontinued with that paper. If the lucubrations of a rude aboriginal of America shall appear to afford any gratification to the generality of our readers, the whole will be occasionally offered to the public through the medium of the *Time-Piece.* » The politics were republican for both sides of the water. If Freneau was hard pressed by an adversary, he could always bring his muse to his aid as in this sharp hit at Cobbett, in the paper of sep. 13, 1797, in reply to « a despicable mess of scurrility in one of Porcupine's Gazette of last week, in which he mentions he was plagued with the *Time-Piece* for several months » coupled with the explanatiou that the *Time-Piece* had at first been sent to Porcupine, according to editorial custom, « till finding the hoggishness of the fellow, in not consenting to an exchange, the transmission was discontinued. »

From Penn's famous city what hosts have departed,
The streets and the houses are nearly deserted,
But still there remain
Two Vipers, that's plain,
Who soon, it is thought, yellow flag will display;
&c. &c.

Captain Freneau, having concluded his active political career and his voyages to Madeira and the west Indies, passed his latter days in New Jersey, occasionally visiting New York, where he saw his friends in the democratic ranks of the day.

Of his associations at this time we have a pleasing reminiscence in an original sketch, written by Dr. John W. Francis of New York.

Some time after the conclusion of the war of 1812, a number of Freneau's M.S. poems of which he had many, were consumed by fire, in the destruction of his house at Mount Pleasant.

That he was not indifferent to his reputation, the several collections of his writings prove, and we learn from the venerable engraver of wood Alexander Anderson, that Freneau once applied to him to calculate the cost of an illustrated volume of the poems, which he found too great for his purse.

Freneau died Dec. 18, 1832. The circumstances of his death were thus announced, in the *Monmouth (New Jersey) Inquirer :* — « Mr. Freneau was in the village, and started, towards evening, to go home, about two miles. In attempting to go across he appears to have got lost and mired in a bog meadow, where his lifeless corpse was discovered yesterday morning. Captain Freneau was a staunch Whig in the time of the Revolution, a good soldier, and a warm patriot. The production of his pen animated his countrymen in the darkest days of '76, and the effusions of his muse cheered the desponding soldier as he fought the battles of freedom. »

The house which Freneau occupied at the time of his death is still standing. It is about a mile from Freehold. The house in which he lived before he went to Freehold, and the old tavern in which he and his club of friends met, are also in existence at Middletown Point. The tavern has lately been repaired and is now occupied as a private dwelling.

The poems of Philip Freneau represent his times, the war of wit and verse no less than of sword and stratagem of the Revolution ; and he superadds to this material a humorous,

homely simplicity peculiarly his own, in which he paints the life of village rustics, with their local manners fresh about them, of days when tavern delights were to be freely spoken of, before temperance societies and Maine laws were thought of; when men went to prison at the summons of inexorable creditors, and when Connecticut deacons rushed out of meeting to arrest and way lay the passing Sunday traveller. When these humors of the day were exhausted, and the impulses of patriotism were gratified in song, when he had paid his respects to Rivington and Hugh Gaine, he solaced himself with higher themes, in the version of an ode of Horace, a visionary meditation on the antiquities of America, or a sentimental effusion, on the love of Sappho. These show the fine tact and delicate handling of Freneau, who deserves much more consideration in this respect from critics than he has ever received. A writer from whom the fastidious Campbell, in his best day, thought it worth while to borrow an entire line, is worth looking into. It is from his *Indian Burying Ground*, the last image of that fine visionary stanza: —

By midnight moons, o'er moistening dews,
In vestments for the chase array'd,
The hunter still the deer pursues,
The hunter and the deer — a shade.

Campbell has given the line a rich setting in the « lovelorn fantasy » of *O' Conor's Child* : —

Bright at the bow that spans the storm,
    In Erin's yellow vesture clad,
A son of light — a lovely form,
    He comes and makes her glad;
Now on the grass — green turf he sits,
    His tassel'd horn beside him laid;
Now o'er the hills in chace he flits,
    The hunter and the deer a shade.

There is also a line of Sir Walter Scott which has its prototype in Freneau. In the introduction to the third canto of

Marmion, in the apostrophe to the Duke of Brunswick, we read : —

> Lamented, chief! not thine the power
> To save in that presumptuous hour,
> When Prussia hurried to the field,
> And snatch'd the spear but left the shield.

In Freneau's poem on the heroes of Eutaw, we have this stanza : —

> They saw their injur'd country's woe;
> The flaming town, the wasted field,
> Then rushed to meet the insulting foe;
> They took the spear — but left the shield.

An anecdote, which the late Henry Brevoort was accustomed to relate of his visit to Scott, affords assurance that the poet was really indebted to Freneau, and that he would not, on a proper occasion, have hesitated to acknowledge it. Mr. Brevoort was asked by Scott respecting the authorship of certain verses on the battle of Eutaw, which he had seen in a magazine, and had by heart and which he knew were American. He was told that they were by Freneau, when he remarked the poem is as fine a thing as there is of the kind in the language. Scott also praised one of the Indian poems.

We might add to these instances, that in 17^C0, Freneau, in his poetical correspondence between Nanni the Philadelphia House-Keeper, and Nabby her friend in New York, upon the subject of the removal of Congress to the former city had hit upon some of the peculiar pleasantry of Moore's Epistles in verse of that century.

Freneau surprises us often by his neatness of execution and skill in versification. He handles a triple rhymed stanza in the octosyllabic measure particularly well. His appreciation of nature is tender and sympathetic, one of the pure springs which fed the more boisterous current of his humor when he came out among men to deal with quackery pretence

and injustice. But what is perhaps most worthy of notice in Freneau is his originality, the instinct with which his genius marked out a path for itself in those days, when most writers were leaning upon the old foreign school of Pope and Darwin. He was not afraid of home things and incidents. Dealing with facts and realities, and the life around him, wherever he was, his writings have still an interest where the vague expressions of other poets are forgotten. His poems may be little read now—they are so rare that we have tasked the resources of booksellers, and put friendship to the proof to draw together the several editions to prepare this article — but they will be surely revived and cherished among the historic and poetic literature of the land. The tree which plants its roots most firmly in the present, will survive the longest with posterity. The genius which has no local habitation for its muse, no personality of relation to time and place to day (and how much poetry is there thrown upon the public which it is impossible to locate), will be, in sporting langaage nowhere to morrow.

It is a little remarkable that four of the most original writers whom that country has produced have received the least attention from critics and magazinists. — Francis Hopkinson, John Trumbull, Brackenbridge, and Freneau. In the very few notices to be met with of the last, he is for the most part mentioned in apologetic tone — as if he were a mere writer of doggrel, low in taste and poor in expression. Even an admirer, who compliments him in verse, has something of this:

Let Freneau live though Flattery's baleful tongue
To early tuned his youthful lyre to song,
And ripe old age, in ill-directed zeal,
Has made an enervated last appeal:
His song could fire the sailor on the wave,
Raise up the coward, — animate the brave,
While wit and satire cast their darts around,
And fools and cowards tremble at the sound.

Although Ambition never soar'd to claim
The meed of polished verse, or classic fame,
And caustic critics honour, but condemn,
A strain of feeling, but a style too tame.
Let the old Bard, whose patriot voice has fann'd
The fire of Freedom that redeemed our land,
Live on the scroll with kindred names that swell
The page of history where their honours dwell;
With full applause, in honor to his age,
Dismiss the veteran poet from the stage,
Crown his last exit with distinguished praise,
And kindly hide his baldness with his bays.
(American Bards, Phila, 1820)

How his contemporaries could sometimes appreciate him, is shown in an epistle in Col. Parke's volume of Horatian translations, and other poems, published at Philadelphia in 1786. In the rarity of these tributes, is worth quoting: —

TO MR. PHILIP FRENEAU, ON HIS VOLUME OF EXCELLENT POEMS, PRINTED BY MR. BAILEY

« *Difficile est satiram non scribere.* » — *Juv.*

Tho' I know not your person, I well know your merit
&c. &c.
Philadelphia, June 8, 1786.

It is not to be denied however, that Freneau was sometime careless. He lived and thought with improvidence. His jests are sometimes misdirected; and his verses are unequal in execution. Yet it is not too much to predict that through the genuine nature of some of his productions, and the historic incidents of others, all that he wrote will yet be called for, and find favor in numerous popular editions.

VIII.

CHARLES BROCKDEN BROWN.

It is somewhat remarkable that the first of American novelists, as well as the first American painters, should have sprung from a sect, which in principle and practice manifests repugnance rather than sympathy with the products of the imagination.

Charles Brockden Brown, was like Benjamin West, of Quaker lineage, his ancestors having emigrated to Pennsylvania in the same ship which brought William Penn to her shores. He was born in Philadelphia on the seventeenth of January, 1771. His middle name was derived from his uncle, who was settled in this country at an early period, under somewhat peculiar circumstances. This relative was brought up in England as a student in the office of a lawyer who was disaffected to the government of the reigning monarch, Charles II. While pursuing his studies he accidentally overheard a conversation between his employer and a number of other persons, in which a plot against the government was broached. At the close of the conference the auditor was discovered. A number urged that he should be put to death, but his life was spared by the lawyer's assertion that the youth

was of too feeble intellectual capacity to make use of his knowledge. It was then decided that he should be sent out of the country, but the project was not executed until some time after, when some circumstances had re-excited the fears of the conspirators. He was shipped to Philadeiphia, where he rapidly rose to official eminence. He was the « skilful conveyancer » and « great scrivener » who drew up the articles of agreement of the Philadelphia Library for Benjamin Franklin.

The early years of the future novelist were marked by intellectual precocity and physical weakness. He found food in books for the craving caused by the one, and a solace, for the deprivations entailed by the other. When but an infant he could be safely left without other companion than a picture-book, which would engross his attention so completely as to exclude all ideas of mischief and apprehensions of danger. A few years after he would be found in his stockings (an instance of cautious neatness characteristic of Quaker training) mounted on a table in order to trace out the courses of rivers and mountains on a large map suspended to the wall. This was so favorite a study with him that at the age of ten he could answer any geographical question started in the family. It was a taste which continued through life; one of the works on which he was employed at the time of his death being a treatise on this same subject. General literature was, however, equally attractive, as he devoured the contents of every book be could lay his hand upon.

A characteristic anecdote is related of him when at the age of ten years. « Why does he call me boy ? » said he, referring to a visitor, who had just left the room, and had thus addressed him in contemptuous reproof for some question or remark; « does he not know that it is neither size nor age, but understanding, that makes the man ? I could ask him a hundred questions, none of which he could answer. »

At the age of eleven he entered the school of Robert Proud, a renowned teacher of those days. He remained here

five years, pursuing classical studies with such ardor that his slight physical frame often broke down under his exertions. His periods of relaxation were not, however, passed in inaction. He followed the good advice of his instructor to turn for a while his back on the city as well as the school, and recruit in the pure country air. The excursions consequently performed were generally pedestrian, and were conducive to mental as well as physical strength; though, as he was usually without a companion, they served somewhat to confirm him in a reserved habit of mind. A passion for verse-making succeeded the regular duties for school. He laid Virgil and Homer on the shelf only to endeavor to rival their historical poems planned out, one on the Discovery of America, another on Cortez, and a third devoted to Pizarro. Epic writing, however, happily proved but a passing fancy with him.

One of his early poetical attempts met with an amusing mishap. It was an Address to Franklin, but the printer of the periodical in which it appeared saw fit to insert throughout, in place of the author's hero, the name of Washington. « Washington » he says in his journal, « therefore stands arrayed in awkward colors. Philosophy smiles to behold her darling son. She turns with horror and disgust from those who have won the laurel of victory in the field of battle, to this, her favourite candidate, who had never participated in such bloody glory and whose fame was derived from the conquests of philosophy alone. » We next hear of Brown as a law student in the office of Alexander Wilson, a leading member of the Philadelphia bar. The study was as discordant with his mental as its practice with his personal habits. He appears, however, to have at first taken hold of the profession with ardor as he became a member of a law society, bore a leading part in its forensic debates, and was elected its President. This association, however, soon had a rival in the formation of the « Belles Lettres Club » of Which Brown, who was at first averse to the project, soon became the leader. He was conscientiously active in both of these associations,

and his decisions in the cases brought before the first named association show that his mind was well fitted for the legal profession. But directly after the completion of one of these decisions, says one of his friends, « he gave vent to his fancy in a poetical effusion, as much distinguished by its wild and eccentric brilliancy as the other composition was for its plain sobriety and gravity of style. » This anecdote shows the bias of his tastes, and foreshadows the determination arrived at on the conclusion of his studies — the abandonment of law for literature.

The change was one regretted by his family who had no fortune on which he could fall back from the hazards of an author's career for support; but it was not the wilful prosecution of a whim on the part of Brown. With a view to the improvement of his style he had for some time past kept a dayly record of his thoughts and experiences, in which he copied the letters he wrote to his friends and those which he received in return — a practice somewhat similar to that of the inveterate journalizer, Haydon, the painter, who pasted all the letters addressed to him in the ample pages of his folio records. He had tested his intellectual powers in his club compositions and in a series of essays under the appropriate title of *The Rhapsodist*, which were published in 1789 in the « Columbus Magazine. » Their reception had given him confidence in his intellectual resources. A distrust of his qualifications for the more active legal career was doubtless an equally or more exciting cause of his determination. The decision must, however, be regarded, as it seems to have afterwards been by its author, as an infortunate one. The demands of a profession were precisely those which he needed to cure his shyness, call him from a too retired mode of life, a constant habit of introspection and revery which he indulged to an injurious extent, and which an exclusively literary career tended as his works prove, to foster rather than combat.

Due credit must at the same time be given to him for resolution and bravery. He was not only the first person in

America who ventured to pursue literature as a profession, but almost the first to make an attempt in the field of imaginative writing, disconnected with the advocacy of any question of national or local interest.

He sought relief from the doubts and anxieties incident to this change of his plans in a journey to New York to visit his intimate friend Dr. Elihu Hubbard Smith, with whom he had become acquainted while the latter was prosecuting his medical studies at Philadelphia. He was introduced by this gentleman to William Dunlap, the painter and author, and to most of the leading literary and scientific men of the city; many of whom met a weekly reunion under the pleasant title of the « Friendly Club » of which Brown, who seems to have deserved the epithet of Dr. Johnson, that of being a « clubable man, » soon became a member. Owing, doubtless, to the attractiveness of the choice literary society of these gentlemen; our author's visit to New York were more prolonged, and following one another at less and less intervals, he virtually became a resident of the city.

A letter published in the « Literary Magazine » written about this time, descriptive of a journey to Rockaway, contains a pleasant and curious description of that celebrated watering place, which he speaks of as at that time « a place of fashionable resort. »

He wrote in the autumn and winter of 1797 a work which he refers to in his journal as « the dialogue of Alcuin, in which the topic of Marriage is discussed with some degree of subtlety, at least. » It was published in the same year, but its crude and hazardous theories on the subject of divorce and other social topics excited little attention, and were abandoned by the author as he grew wiser and older. He also speaks in his journal of having commenced a novel in a series of letters, which was never completed.

During the summer of 1798 the yellow fever broke out in New York. Brown unwilling to lose the society of his friend Smith, in whose house he was then resident, determin-

ed to remain in the city, relying for security, as he states in a letter to his brother James, on his mode of living, « from which animal food and spirituous liquors are wholly excluded.» He also relied on the remoteness of the residence from the infected district. The latter advantage was neutralized by the human conduct of himself and Dr. Smith in removing the friend of the latter, Scandella, an Italian gentleman who was attacked by the disease, to their home, where he soon after died. Both friends caught the infection but Smith fell and Brown recovered.

His correspondence bears touching evidence of his sorrow for the loss of his friend, and his novel of Arthur Mervyn gives a similar testimony of the lasting effect which his experience as an eyewitness of and sufferer from the pestilence here and his native city in 1793 made upon him.

We next hear of a magazine projected by Brown. It does not seem te have got out of the limbo of castle-building, although the requisites to insure success are moderate. They are thus stated in a letter to his brother Armit, and are interesting as an item of literary history :

« Four hundred subscribers will repay the annual expence of sixteen hundred dollars. As soon as this number is obtained, the printers will begin, and trust to the punctual payment of these for reimbursement. All above four hundred will be dear profit to me; one thousand subscribers will produce four thousand five hundred dollars, and deducting the annual expense will leave two thousand seven hundred. »

We find him in 1798 contributing a series of paper entitled *The Man at Home* to the « Weekly Magazine »* a miscellany of some merit. These papers have a connecting thread of story, but are for the most part occupied with reflections on men and society. They extend through the first

* The Weekly Magazine of Original Essays, Fugitive Pieces, and Interesting Intelligence. Phila : James Walters 8vo pp. 32. It appears to have been continued over a year.

volume, and are followed in the second by his novel of Arthur Mervyn.

The projected magazine gave way to a series of far greater importance, not only to the reputation of the author but to that of the literature of his country. His first step, however, in the career which was to make him famous was arrested by an annoying mishap. The story is worth relating as it shows the obstacles with which autorship in America had to struggle in its infancy. Brown wrote his first novel, bearing the title of *Sky Walk, or the Man Unknown to Himself.* * The printer who had engaged to print the work and look to its sale for his pay, died when his task was nearly completed. His executors refused to fulfil the contract or to sell the printed sheets at the price the author's friends offered for them, and thus « Sky Walk » was denied a terrestrial career. The fate of the sheets is unknown. Brown, who judging from the number of his fragmentary manuscripts as well as the incomplete nature of his published works, wrote quite as much to please himself as the public, did not probably take the matter to heart, and afterwards incorporated portions of his ill-fated novel in Edgar Huntley.

In the year 1798 his « Wieland » appeared. It was published in a duodecimo volume of some three hundred pages by T. e J. Swords and H. Caritat. Its success was immediate, and so stimulating to its author that in the December after its publication he wrote « Ormond. » The publication of this second novel in New York, 1799, was followed by the first part of that of Arthur Mervyn during the same year in Philadephia. This was followed in a few months by « Edgar Huntley, » in 1800 by the second part of « Arthur Mervyn, » and in the next year by « Clara Howard » and « Jane Talbot. » His literary labors at this period seem to have been interrupted only by a short visit to some friends at Middle-

* The « proposals » for the publication appear on the cover of the Weekly Magazine, published in Philadelphia in 1798.

town, Connecticut, in June, 1799; by a similar excursion to Princeton, New Jersey, to meet his eldest brother, whose ordinary residence was Charleston, south Carolina, and a tour of a few weeks in the summer of 1801 up the Hudson, through Massachusetts to Northampton and thence by Hartford and New Haven to New York.

This rapid succession of fictitious narratives is almost unexampled in literary history, but does not seem to have satisfied the intellectual activity of their author. In the month of April, 1799, he carried out his favorite plan of a periodical by the issue in New York of No. 1 of the *Monthly Magazine and American Review*. He was the chief contributor to its pages, but it does not seem to have met a success equal to his novels, as it closed with the century in 1800. A second attempt was more permanent; *The Literary Magazine and American Register* started in October, 1803 in Philadelphia, where its projector was again a resident, having been continued for five years.

In 1803 he also published the first of several political essays, that on the Cession of Louisiana to France, in which he advocated the purchase of that region by the United States; and the progressive territorial extension of the Union, in animated earnest language. In November 1804 he married Miss Elisabeth Linn, daughter of the Rev. Dr. William Linn of New York.

Brown whose mind seems to have been at all times clear and practical with regard to the duties of life, aware, perhaps of the limited scope of his novels, and finding himself breaking loose from the pecularities of mental existence to which they owe their power as well as their individuality, applied himself to graver though less ambitious labor, and devoted himself, after his marriage, with increased energy to his literary career. He projected, and by the aid of Mr. Conrad, the active publisher of his magazine, issued in 1806 the first volume of the « American Register. » This was the first publication of its kind which appeared in the country. It

contained European and American Annals, Review of Literature, Foreign and American State papers, Miscellaneous Articles, an American Obituary, and a Chronicle, consisting of large number of brief articles. The narrative portions are excellent. This series was continued in semi-annual volumes, interrupted only by the death of its author, five years afterwards.

A second political pamphlet appeared about this time on the Jay Treaty, rejected by Jefferson.

A third entitled « *An Address to the Congress of the United States on the utility and justice of restrictions upon Foreign Commerce, with reflections on Foreign Trade in general and the future prospects of America*, was published in 1809.

He also planned a system of general geography, which with the exception of the part relating to the United States, was completed at the time of his death. It has never been admirably executed. He also made considerable progress in a work on Rome during the Age of the Antonines, similar to Anacharsi's Travel in Greece. *

In addition to these M. SS. he left behind him a number of elaborately executed achitectural drawings, a study which was always a favorite with him.

In reading of such a constant series of important intellectual productions we are in danger of forgetting that their author was a man weak in body though strong in mind. It was doubtless solely in consequence of the strict regime ** of his life that he was enabled to resist the attacks of disease which, as we have seen had seized upon him almost at his birth, until the thirty-ninth year. « When, » says he, in a letter written to a friend about this period, « have I known

---

* Life prefixed to the Edition of his novels, 1827.

** Brown was an abstinent from spirituous liquors long before the date of temperance societies, and was equally simple in his diet. In oue of his magazines he has written papers on the deleterious effect of intemperance; and of the use of greasy articles of food.

that lightness and vivacity of mind, which the divine flow of health even in calamity, produces in some men? Never scarcely ever. Not longer than half an hour at a time, since I have called myself man.» In order to combat the now rapidly advancing strides of consumption he was induced to lay aside his books, as years ago in his schoolboy days he had been forced to lay aside the books of others, for a journey from home. He accordingly made a brief visit to New York, stopping at several points in the state of New Jersey. This was the Summer 1809. On the tenth of November in the same year he took to his bed « whith a violent pain in his side for which he was bled »—and was confined to his room until his death on the twenty-second of February following. The gentleness and equanimity of his life did not desert him at its close. Though often tortured by disease he conversed cheerfully with his wife and friends, and retained full possession of his faculties to the last.

Brown describes himself as « mute among strangers.» Like many persons of reserved habits he took intense enjoyment in the society of his intimate friends. His stationary mode of life shows that he had little of the spirit, of adventure. « I would rather » he says, « consort for ever with a ploughman or even an old Bergen market-woman, than expose myself to a hundredth part of the perils which beset the heels of a Ledyard or a Park. » He was careless of his money, and slowenly in dress. His description of Mervyn has been well applied by his biographer, Dunlap, to himself. « My existence is a series of thoughts, rather than of Motions Ratiocinations and deduction leave my senses unemployed.» He appears to have had but little symphathy with the Quakers. « The truth is, » he says, « I am not better than an outcast of that unwarlike sect.» His religious views were unsettled in the early period of his life, but in the preface to his magazine he emphatically professes his faith in Christianity. His moral character was unexceptionable. He was much beloved by his friends and relatives, and was liberal notwith-

standing his poverty, receiving his sister-in-law, on their father's death, into his own family.

In person, Brown was tall and strongly framed, but extreemely thin. His complexion was pale and sallow, his hair straight and black. The expression of his face was strongly marked with melancholy. « I saw him, » says Sully, the painter, « a little before his death. I had never known him — never read any of his works. He was in a deep decline. It was in the month of November — our Indian Summer — when the air is full of smoke. Passing a window one day, I was caught by the sight of a man, with a remarkable physiognomy, writing at a table in a dark room. The sun shone directly upon his head. I never shall forget it. The dead leaves were falling then — it was Charles Brockden Brown. » « Brown lived in Philadelphia, » sais John Neal, who furnishes this anecdote, « in Eleventh, between Walnut and Chesnut streets in a low, dirty, two-story brick house, standing a little *in* from the street — with never a tree nor a shrub near it. » His novels, though successful, probably added little to his financial resources. He says in one of his letters to his brother, James Brown, dated New York, April, 1800, « Book making, as you observe, is the dullest of all trades, and the most that any American can look for in his native country is to be reimbursed for his unavoidable expenses. *** The saleability of my works will much depend upon their popularity in England, whither Caritat has carried a considerable number of Wieland, Ormond, and Mervyn. »

The novels were reprinted and well received in England, though we are not aware that the author ever derived any pecuniary advantage from their success. Arthur Mervyn and Edgar Huntley have taken a place in Bentley's Library of Standard Romance.

Brown entertained a moderate estimate of his own literary powers. In the prospectus to his « Literary Magazine, » issued October, 1803, he says — « I shall take no pains to conceal my name. Anybody may know it who choses to ask

me or my publishers. I shall not, however, put it at the bottom of this address. My diffidence, as my friends would call it, and my discretion, as my enemies (if I have any) would term it, hinders me from calling out my name in a crowd. **

I am far from wishing, however, that my readers should judge of my exertion by my former ones. I have written much, but take much blame to myself for something which I have written, and take no praise for anything. I should enjoy a larger share of my own respect, at the present moment, if nothing had ever flowed from my pen, the production of which could be traced to me. A variety of causes induce me to form such a wish, but I am principally influenced by the consideration that time can scarcely fail of enlarging and refining the power of a man; while the world is sure to judge of his capacities and principles at fifty from what he has written at fifteen. »

He was not, however, insensible to the pleasure of success. In a letter to his brother, dated Feb., 15, 1799, almost the only in which he alludes to the success of his literary attempts, he says, « I add somewhat, though not so much as I might if I were so inclined to the number of my friends. I find to be the writer of *Wieland* and *Ormond* is a greater recommandation than I ever imagined it would be. »

Caleb Williams was published in 1794. Wieland appeared four years later. There is an undoubted resemblance between this and Brown's other novels and that of Godwin. That Brown admired Caleb Williams is amply proved by his letter to his brother, in which he speaks of its « transcendent merits as compared to the mass of novels. » The two authors were alike in their earnestness and directness, and in their sombre views of society. They both relied more on the development of a story, the working out of an idea, than on the exhibition of character. There is also some similarity of style. Here however, the resemblance ceases. Caleb Williams is written to expose the evils of the social system of England, and of the exaggerated ideas of personal honor derived from the times

of chivalry working on a noble but morbidly sensitive hero. Wieland is a fanciful attempt to illustrate the effects which might be produced by the comparatively trifling agency of ventriloquism. One deals, as its title faithfully promises, with « things as they are » — the other tries to trick us into a belief in the supernatural, though not actually deserting the regions of the real — scenes, incidents, characters, results, are all different.

In writing Wieland, Brown seems to have taken a lesson from the laboratories of his numerous medical friends, rather than from any literary model. He probably derived the opening incident, the destruction of the elder Wieland by spontaneous combustion, from the doctors. As he continues his characters are passive matter in his hands. He troubles himself little if any to individualize. They are nothing apart from the circumstances which surround them. It is only when brought into conjunction in the lonely country-house, like the contents of the crucible, that they show their latent virtues, and like these too they are well nigh absorbed in the result. The incidents of the tale are equally faulty. The supernatural voice whose monitions lead Wieland to immolate wife and children, turns out to be miserable trickery of the « biloquist » Carwin, who commencing the purposeless annoyance of a family of strangers, has not the courage to avow his tricks until after they have led to this bloody catastrophe. With all its improbabilities however, the tale enforces the breathless attention of the reader from beginning to end.

Brown was sensible of the abruptness ot the introduction of Carwin, and to mend the matter commenced the memoirs of the early career of this mysterious and disagreeable personage in the « Literary Magazine. » He abandoned the plan after writing a few chapters which have no connexion whatever with the story they were intended to complete, except in the relation of the manner in which the « biloquist » becomes sensible of his peculiar powers.

The other novels have a more real though not less in-

tense interest. They introduce us to a somewhat wider range of characters, men of mixed and complicated natures, not the blind slaves and passive agents of a single idea.

They bring us, too, to the city, but it is often to the city in its plague-stricken agonies, when its streets are almost as desolate as the frontier settlement and wooded fastnesses in which the author delights. We have little of the domestic life either of city or country. There is scarcely any dialogue to stay the stern progress of events — the characters are more disposed to soliloquize than to talk. We have few glimpses of indoor comfort in mansion or cottage, no peaceful views of smiling landscape. Brown can depict natural scenery, and does it too with a firm and bold hand, but his pictures have more of Salvator than of Claude. In the wild scenery of Pennsylvania in the then wilderness of the Forks of the Delaware, he is as much at home as among the right angles of his native city. In Edgar Huntley he has given full scope to his love of natural scenery. The strange wild ramble of the somnambulist through cave, forest, and river, is full of fine description, though the varying scene is suggested rather than portrayed. The adventures with the cougar and the Indians in the same story are wonderfully animated; anticipating and foreshadowing the more elaborate efforts of the great successor of the first American novelist.

IX.

JAMES FENIMORE COOPER.

James Fenimore Cooper was born at Burlington, New Jersey, September 15, 1789. He was the descendant of an English family who settled at that place in 1679. His father, Judge William Cooper, was born in Pennsylvania, whither a portion of the family had removed, but in early life selected the old family home at Burlington as his residence. He was a man of high social position and became possessed in 1785 of a large tract of land in the neighborhood of Otsego lake, in the State of New York. A settlement was formed to which he gave the name of Cooperstown, and in 1790 removed his family thither. He was the leading man of the place, and in 1795 and 1799 represented the district in Congress.

It was in this frontier home surrounded by noble scenery, and a population composed of adventurous settlers, hardy trappers, and the remnant of the noble Indian tribes, who were once sole lords of the domain, that the novelist passed his boyhood to his thirteen year. It was a good school for his future calling. At the age mentioned he entered Yale College, where he remained three years, maintaining notwithstanding his youth a good positiou in his class, when he

obtained a midshipman's commission, and entered the navy. The six following years of his life were passed in that service, and he was thus early and thoroughly familiarized with the second great field of his future literary career.

In 1811 he resigned his commission, married Miss De Lancey, a member of an old and leading family of the State of New York, and sister to the bishop of its western diocese, and settled down to a home life in the village of Mamaroneck, near the city of New York. It was not long after that, almost accidentally, his literary career commenced. He had been reading an English novel to his wife, when on laying aside the book, he remarked that he believed that he could write a better story of himself. He forthwith proceeded to test the matter, and produced *Precaution*. The manuscript was completed, he informs us, without any intention of publication. He was, however, induced by the advice of his wife, and his friend Charles Wilkes, in whom he placed great confidence, to issue the work. It appeared, sadly deformed by misprints.

Precaution is a story on the old pattern of English rural life, the scene alternating between the hall, the parsonage, and other upper-class regions of a country town. A scene on the deck of a man-of-war, bringing her prizes into port, is almost the only indication of the writer's true strength. It is a respectable novel, offering little or no scope of comment, and was slightly valued then or afterwards by its author.

In 1821 he published *The Spy, a Tale of the Neutral Ground,* a region familiar to him by his residence within its borders. Harvey Birch, the spy, is a portrait from life of a revolutionary patriot, who was willing to risk his life and to subject his character to temporary suspicion for the service of his country. He appears in the novel as a pedlar, with a keen eye to trade as well as the movements of the enemy. The claim of Enoch Crosby a native of Danbury, who was employed in this manner in the war, to be the original of

this character, has been set forth with much show of probability by a writer. Captain H. L. Barnum, in a small volume entitled « The Spy Unmasked, » containing an interesting biography, but the matter has never been definitively settled, Cooper leaving the subject in doubt in the preface to the revised edition of the novel in 1849. The rugged, homely worth of Harvey Birch, his native shrewdness combined with heroic boldness, which develops itself in deeds, not in the heroic speeches which an ordinary novelist would have placed in his mouth, the dignified presentation of Washington in the slight disguise of the assumed name of Harper, the spirit of the battle scenes and hairbreadth escapes which abound in the narrative, the pleasant and truthful home scenes of the country mansion, place the Spy in the foremost rank of fiction. Its patriotic theme, a novelty at the time in the works of American romance, aided the impression made by its intrinsic merits.

It was followed, two years later by *The Pioneers ;* or *The Sources of the Susquehanna, a Descriptive Tale.* In this the author drew on the early recollection of his life. He has described with minuteness the scenery which surrounded his father's residence, and probably some of its visitors and occupants. The best known character of the story of the world-renowned Leather-stocking, the noble pioneer, the chevalier of the woods. The author has aimed in this character at combining the heroic with the practical. Leather-stocking has the rude dialect of a backwoodsman, unformed, almost uneducated, by schools. He is before us in his native simplicity and native vigor, as free from the trickery of art as the trees which surround him. He was a new actor on the crowded stage of fiction, who at once commanded hearing and applause. The Pioneers well redeems is title of a descriptive tale, by its animated presentation of the vigourous and picturesque country life of its time and place, and its equally successful delineations of natural scenery.

The Pilot, the first of the sea novels, next appeared. It originated from a conversation of the author with his friend

Wilkes on the naval inaccuracies of the novel of the Pirate. Cooper's attention thus drawn to this field of composition, he determined to see how far could meet his own requirements. The works extended its writer's reputation, not only by showing the new field of which he was master, but by its evidences, surpassing any he had yet given, of power and energy. The ship, with whose fortunes we have to do in this story, interest us like creatures of flesh and blood. We watch the chase and the fight like those who have a personal interest in the conflict, as if ourselves a part of the crew, with life and honor in the issue. Long Tom Coffin is probably the most widely-known sailor character in existence. He his an example of the heroic in action, like Leather-stocking losing not a whit of his individuality of body and mind in his nobleness of soul.

Lionel Lincoln, the next novel, was a second attempt in the revolutionary field of the Spy which did not share in treatment or reception with its success.

It was followed in the same year by *The Last of the Mohicans*, *a Narrative* of 1757, in which we again meet Leather-stocking, in an early age of his career, and find the Indians, of whom we have had occasional glimpses in the Pioneers, in almost undisturbed possession of their hunting grounds. In this story Cooper increased his hold on the young, the true public of the romantic novelist by the spirit of his delineations of forest life. He has met objections which have been raised by maturer critics to his representations of the Aborigenes in this and other works, in the following passage in the « Preface to the Leather-stocking Tale » published in 1850 : —

« It has been objected to these books that they give a more favorable picture of the red man than he deserves. The writer apprehends that much of this objection arises from the habits of those who have made it. One of his critics, on the appearance of the first work in which Indian character was

portrayed, objected that its 'characters were Indians of the School of Heckewelder, rather than of the School of nature'. These words quite probably contain the substance of the true answer to the objection. Heckewelder was an ardent benevolent missionary, bent on the good of the red man, and seeing in him one who had the soul, reason, and characteristic of a fellow-being. The critic is understood to have been a very distinguished agent of the government, one very familiar with Indians, as they are seen at the councils to treat for the sale of their lands, where little or none of their domestic qualities come in play, and where indeed their evil passions are known to have the fullest scope. As just would it be to draw conclusions of the general State of American Society from the Scenes of the capital, as to suppose that the negotiating of one of these treaties is a fair picture of Indian life.

It is the privilege of all writers of fiction, more particularly when their works aspire to the elevation of romances, to present the *beau-idéal* of their characters to the reader. This it is which constitutes poetry, and to suppose that the red man is to be represented only in the squalid misery or in the degraded moral state that certainly more or less belongs to his condition, is we apprehend, taking a very narrow view of an author's privileges. Such criticism would have deprived the world of even Homer. »

In the same year Cooper visited Europe, having received a little before his departure the honor of a public dinner in the city of New York. He passed several years abroad, and was warmly welcomed in every country he visited, his works being already as well known, through translations in foreign languages as in his own. He owed this wide-spread fame to his wisdom in the selection of topics. He was read by those who wished to learn something of the aboriginal and pioneer life of America, in the eyes of Europeans the characteristic features of the country; and it is a common remark of the educated classes of German emigrants in America, that they

derived their first knowledge, and perhaps their first interest in their future home, from his pages.

Cooper's literary activity was not impaired by his change of scene. He published in 1827 *The Prairie.* Leather-stocking re-appears and closes his career in its pages. « Pressed upon by time he has ceased to be the hunter and the warrior, and has become a trapper of the great West.

The sound of the axe has driven him from his beloved forests to seek a refuge, by a species of desperate resignation, on the denuded plains that stretch to the Rocky Mountains. Here he passes the few closing years of his life, dying as he had lived, a philosopher of the wilderness, with few of the failings, none of the vices, and all the nature and truth of his position. » * The descriptions of natural scenery, the animated Scenes with the Indians, and the rude vigor of the emigrant family, render this one of the most successful of the novelist's productions.

In the same year *The Red Rover* appeared, a second sea novel, which shared the success of the Pilot, a work which it fully equals in animation and perhaps surpasses in romantic interest.

In 1828 Cooper published *Notions of the Americans, by a Travelling Bachelor.* It purports to be a book of travels in the United States, and is designed to correct the many erroneous impressions which he found prevalent in English society, regarding his country. It is an able refutation of the slanders of the penny-a-line tourists who had so solely tried the American temper, and contains a warm-hearted eulogy of the people and institutions of his country.

It was at the time of publication of this work that Halleck coupled a humorous reference to it with his noble tribute to the novelist, in the commencement of the poem of Red Jacket: —

> Cooper, whose name is with his country's woven,
> First in her files, her *Pioneer* of mind —
> A wanderer now in other climes, has proven
> His love for the young land he left behind;

---

* Note to the revised edition of *The Prairie.*

And throned her in the senate-hall of nations,
  Robed like the deluge rainbow, heaven-wrought;
Magnificent as his own mind's creations,
  And beautiful as its green world of thought;

And faithful to the Act of Congress, quoted
  As law authority, it passed nem. con.:
He writes that we are, as ourselves have voted,
  The most enlightened people ever known.

That all our week is happy as a Sunday
  In Paris, full of song, and dance, and laugh;
And that, from Orleans to the Bay of Fundy,
  Ther's not a bailiff or an epitaph.

And furthermore — in fifty years, or sooner,
  We shall export our poetry and wine;
And our brave fleet, eight frigates and a schooner,
  Will sweep the seas from Zembla to the Line.

His neat novel, published in 1829, was *The Wept of Wish-ton-Wish.* He was in Paris at the breaking out of the Revolution of 1830, and suggested a plan to La Fayette, with whom he was very intimate * that Henry V. Should be recognized as king, and educated as a constitutional monarch, that the peerage should be abolished, and replaced by a senate to be elected by the general vote of the whole nation, the lower house being chosen by the departments — a scheme which combines the stability of an uninterrupted hereditary descent with a proper scope for political progress, two elements that have not as yet been united in the various governmental experiments of that country. This plan was first given to the public some years after in one of the author's volumes of Travels.

His next novel was the *Water Witch*, a sea tale which he had relied for a portion of its interest on the supernatural.

---

* He was one of the most active leaders of the demonstrations of welcome to La Fayette on his visit to the United States in 1824. — *Dr. Francis's Reminiscences of Cooper.*

He, about the same time, undertook the defence of his country from a charge made in the *Revue Britannique*, that the government of the United States was one of the most expensive, and entailed as heavy a burden of taxation on those under its sway, as any in the world.

He met this charge by a letter, which was translated into French, and published with a similar production by General Bertrand, whose long residence in America had rendered him familiar with the subject.

These letters, prepared and published at the suggestion of La Fayette, were in turn responded to, and the original slanders reiterated. Cooper in reply, published a series of letters in the *National*, a leading daily paper of Paris, the last of which appeared May 2, 1832. In these he triumphantly established his position. It was during this discussion that he published *The Bravo,* which embodied to some extent the points at issue in the controversy. In the words of Bryant, « his object was to show how institutions professedly created to prevent violence and wrong, become, when perverted from their natural destination, the instruments of injustice, and how, in every system which makes power the exclusive property of the strong, the weak are sure to be oppressed. » The scene of this story is laid in Venice, a new field for his descriptive powers, to which he brings the same vigor and freshness which had characterized his scenes of forest life. The story is dramatic, the characters well contrasted, and in one, the daughter of the jailor, he presented one of the most perfect of his female delineations.

The Bravo was followed in 1832 by *The Heidenmauer,* and in 1833 by *The Headsman of Berne,* the scenes and incidents of both of which, as their titles suggest, were drawn from European history, their political purpose being similar to that of the Bravo.

Cooper's controversies in Europe attracted much attention at home, where his course found opponents as well as partisans; and many who, expressing no opinion on the points

at issue, were disposed to regard him as having provoked a controversy for the gratification of his taste for discussion. It was during this divided state of public opinion that the novelist returned home in 1833.

His first publication after his arrival was *A Letter to my Countrymen* in which he gave a history of his controversy with a portion of the foreign press, and complained of the course pursued by that of his own country in relation thereto. Passing from this personal topic he censured the general deference to foreign criticism prevalent in the country, and entered with warmth into the discussion of various topics of the party politics of the day. He followed up this production by *The Monikins*, a political satire, and *The American Democrat.* « Had a suitable compound offered » he says in the preface to the latter, « the title of this book would have been something like ' Anti-Cant ', for such a term expresses the intention of the writer better, perhaps, than the one he has actually chosen. The work is written more in the spirit of censure than of praise, for its aim is correction; and virtues bring their own reward, while errors are dangerous. »

This little volume embraces almost the entire range of topics connected with American government and society. It is a vigorous presentation of the author's opinions, and its spirit and independence may be best appreciated by the exhibition of one of its briefest but not least pungent sections.

« They Say »

« They Say » is the monarch of this country, in a social sense. No one asks « who says it » so long as it is believed that « they say it. » Designing men endeavor to persuade the publick, that already « they say, » what this designing men wish to be said, and the publick is only too much disposed blindly to join in the cry of « they say. »

This is another consequence of the habit of deferring to the control of the publick, over matters in which the publick has no right to interfere.

Every well meaning man, before he yelds his faculties and intelligence to this sort of dictation, should first ask himself « who » is « they, » and on what authority « they say » utters its mandates.

These works, of course, furnished fruitful matter of comment to some of the newspaper editors of the day, who forgot good manners, and violently assailed the author's peculiarities. These asperities were heightened after the appearance of the novels of *Homeward Bound* and *Home as Found,* in 1838. In these the author introduced, with his usual force, and more than his usual humor, a portraiture of a newspaper editor. The news-papers, taking his humorous picture of the vices of a portion of their class as a slander on the entire body, retorted by nicknaming the author from a gentleman who forms one of the favoured characters of these fictions, « The mild and gentlemanly Mr. Effingham. »

The author now commenced his celebrated libel suit against the Commercial Advertiser and other influential journals. He followed up a tedious and vexatious ligation with his customary resolution and perseverance, bringing suit after suit, until the annoyance of which he complained was terminated. He thus sums up the issue of the affair in a sentence of a letter quoted by Mr. Bryant: « I have beaten every man I have sued who has not retracted his libels. »

The accuracy of his *Naval History of the United States*, published in 1839 in two octavo volumes, was one of the matters which entered into his controversy, and in a suit brought on this issue Cooper appeared and defended in person his account of the Battle of Lake Erie with great ability. A lawyer, who was an auditor of its closing sentences, remarked to Mr. Bryant who also characterized its opening as « clear, skilful, and persuasive, » « I have heard nothing like it since the day of Emmet. »

The publication of the Naval History during this stormy period of the author's career, shows that controversy was far

from occupying his entire attention. This work, as was to be expected from the author's mastery of the subject in another field of literature, was full of spirit. Its accuracy has been generally admitted, save on a few points, which still remain matter of discussion. It was the first attempt to fill an important and glorious portion of the record of the national progress, and still remains the chief authority on the subject, and from the finish and vigor of its battle-pieces, an American classic. During an earlier part of this same period, in 1836 Cooper issued his *Sketches of Switzerland* in four volumes, and in 1837 and 1838 his *Gleanings in Europe, France and Italy*, each occupying two duodecimo volumes. The series forms a pleasant record of his wanderings, of the distinguished men whose friendship he enjoyed, and of the public events which he witnessed, and in some instances was himself partecipant, and contains ingenious criticism on the social and political characteristics of the several countries.

In 1840, while still in the midst of his libel suits, as if to re-assert his literary claims as well as personal rights, he returned to his old and strong field of literary exertion by the publication of *The Pathfinder*, a tale which introduces us again to the scenes, and many of the personages of *The Last of the Mohicans.* It was followed — the novel of *Mercedes of Castile* intervening — in 1841, by *The Deerslayer.* The scene of this fiction is laid on the Otsego lake and its vicinity in the middle of the last century. It abounds in fine descriptions of the scenery of the region, then in its primeval wildness, and succeds admirably in making the reader at home in the life of the pioneer. Many of the incidents of the tale take place in the *ark* or floating habitation of Tom Hutter, the solitary white denizen of the region, who has constructed and adopted this floating fortress as a precaution against the Indians. His family consists of two daughters, Judith and Hetty, in whose characters the author has contrasted great mental vigor combined whith lax moral principle, to enfeebled intellect strengthened by unswerving rectitude. These sisters

are among the most successful of the author's female portraits. Deerslayer's course in the fiction is intended still further to enforce the same great truth of the strength afforded by a simple straight-forward integrity. It is a noble picture of true manliness.

Deerslayer appears in this novel in early youth, and the work is, therefore, now that the Leather-stocking series is completed, to be regarded as that in which he commences his career. This character will always interest the world, both from its essential ingredients, and the novel circumstances in which it exhibts itself. It is the author's ideal of a chivalresque manhood, of the grace which is the natural flower of purity and virtue; not the stoic, but the Christian of the woods, the man of honorable act and sentiment, of courage and truth. Leather-stocking stands half way between savage and civilized life; he has the freshness of nature and the first fruit of Christianity, the seed dropped into the vigorous soil. These are the elements of one of the most original characters in fiction, in whom Cooper has transplanted all the chivalry ever feigned or practised in the middle ages, to the rivers, woods, and forests of the unbroken New World.

Deerslayer, in point of style, is one of Cooper's purest compositions. There are passages of Saxon in the dialogues and speeches, which would do honor to the most admired pages of the romantic old Chroniclers. The language is as noble as the thought.

It is a singular proof of the extent to which the newspaper quarrels we have alluded to had interfered with Cooper's position as a literary man, that the Pathfinder and the Deerslayer, two of the very best of his productions, attracted, but little attention on their first appearance, for which we have the author's authority in his prefaces to the revised editions.

In 1842 Cooper issued two sea novels, *The two Admirals* and *Wing and Wing*, both spirited tales of naval conflict, in which the ships share the vitality in the reader's imagination of the « little Ariel » of the *Pilot*.

Wyandotte; or *the Hutted. Knoll*, appeared in 1843. In this tale Cooper again returns to the Otsego. Ii narrates the settlement of an English family in the vicinity of the lake about the commencement of the Revolution, and abounds in quiet scenes of sylvan beauty, and incidents of a calmer character than are usual in the author's fictions.

The Autobiography of a Pocket-handkerchief, a short tale, originally published from month to month in Graham's Magazine, followed. *Ned Myers*, a more characteristic production, appeared about the same time. In this the author gives the veritable adventures of an old Shipmate, taken down from his own lips. It abounds in striking scenes, which rival in intensity those of his professed fictions.

Cooper's novels followed in rapid succession during the latter period of his life. With his customary spirit he adapted himself to the publishing fashion introduced by the system of cheap reprints, and brought out his new works in twenty-five cent volumes.

Afloat and Ashore, and *Miles Wallingford*, its sequel, also tales of the sea, followed.

In 1844 the author published *A Review of the Mackenzie Case,* a severe comment on the course of the commander of the Somers.

His next novel, *Satanstoe*, published in 1845, was the first of a series avowedly written to denounce the anti-rent doctrines which then attracted much public notice. The scene of Satanstoe is laid in the district in which the outrages connected with this question took place, and the time of the action carries us back to the middle of the last century and the early settlement of the region. In the second of the series, *The chain Bearer*, we have the career of the Little-page family carried down to the second generation at the close of the Revolution. In the third and concluding portion, *The Redskins; or Indian and Ingin,* we come close upon the present day. The style of these fictions is energetic, but they fall short of his earlier productions in the delineation of character

and interest. The treatment of the questions of law involved in the progress of the argument has been pronounced masterly by a competent authority. *

In 1846 Cooper published *Lives of Distinguished American Naval Officers*, a series of biographical sketches written for Graham's Magazine.

The Crater; or, Vulcan's Peak, followed in 1847. The scene of this story is on the shores of the Pacific. It has little to do with real life, the hero being wrecked on a reef, which by supernal machinery, is peopled with a Utopian community, giving the author an opportunity to exhibit his views of government.

Oak Openings; or the Bee Hunter, a story of woodland life, appeared in the same year.

Jack Tier; or the Florida Reef, was published in 1848, from the pages of Graham's Magazine; a story of the sea, resembling in its points of interest the Water-Witch.

The last of the long series of these ocean narratives, *The sea Lions; or the Lost Sealers*, opens on the coast of Suffolk county, Long Island, and transports us to the Antarctic Ocean, in whose « thrilling regions of thick ribbed ice » the author finds ample scope for his descriptive powers. The two ships, the « Sea Lions » pass the winter locked in the ice, and their crews endure the usual mishaps and perils of the region from which they escape in the following summer.

Cooper's last novel appeared in 1850. It was entitled *The Ways of the Hour*, and designed to exhibit the evils in the author's opinion of trial by jury.

Soon after the publication of thes work Cooper, whose personal appearance excited universal remark, from the robust strength and health it exhibited, was attacked by disease. This while it wasted his frame, did not diminish his energy. He had in press a historical work on *The Town of Manhattan*,

---

* Bryant discourse, p. 66.

and in contemplation a sixth Leather-stocking tale, when his disease, gaining strength, developed into a dropsy which closed his life at his country estate at Cooperstown, September 14, 1851, on the eve of his sixty-second birthday.

A public meeting was held in honor of his memory in the city of New York, and a preliminary to the attempt to raise a fund for a monument for the same purpose, at Metropolitan Hall, Feb. 24, 1852. Daniel Webster presided and made his last address to a New York assemblage. A discourse was read by Wm. C. Bryant, to which we have been largely indebted in the preparation of the present sketch.

Mr. Cooper's residence at Cooperstown, to which he removed after his returu from Europe passed out of the hands of his family after his death, was converted into a hotel and consumed by fire in the spring of 1853.

Cooper was the first American author who attained a wide popular reputation beyond the limits of his own language. His novels were translated as soon as they appeared in the principal countries of Europe, where the Indian tales especially were universal favorites. His delineation of the aboriginal character was a novelty which gained him a hearing, and the attention thus obtained was secured and extended by this vivid pictures of the forest and the frontier. These are topics akin in novel interest in the old world to ruined abbeys and castles in the new. Scott has worked the latter field to an extent that lessened the public interest in such scenes when treated by any but himself. Cooper wisely chose a new path which he could make and hold as his own. He tried and succeded.

The novels of Scott set the antiquaries to work rubbing the rust off old armor, and brushing the dust from many an old folio, and illustrating many a well-nigh forgotten chapter of history; and the productions of Cooper have rendered a like service. He has thrown a poetic atmosphere around the departing race, of the Red men, which if it cannot stay their destiny, will do much to fix their place in history.

In his personal character Cooper presents to us a manly resolute nature, of an independent mood, aggressive, fond of the attack; conscious of the strength which had led him to choose his own path in the world and triumph. He never exerted his power, however, but in some chivalrous cause. In Europe he battled for republicanism; in America he was punctilious for the personal virtues which grow up under an aristocracy. It would have been as well, perhaps, if he had sometimes been silent and waited for time to remedy the evils which he contended with; but this was not his nature. He had great powers to which something should have been conceded by others, and it would have been better for the others, as well as for him. The egotism of such a man, if not inevitable, is at least venial.

It was easy for those at a distance to sneer at alleged weakness; but those who knew him well, his family, his friends — and what noble men they were, in the highest stations of trust and confidence in the country — found new demands for simpathy and admiration in Cooper's society. With his intimates he was gay, frank, and warmhearted; fond of the society of childreu, full of sport and merriment from his youth through life.

Miss Susan F. Cooper, a daughter of the novelist, is the author of two volumes of merit. *Rural Homes* published in 1850, is a felicitous journal of country life, describing the scenery and character about her residence at Cooperstown, with minute observation, and with noticeable sincerity of style. *The Rhyme and Reason of Country Life*, published in 1854, is a choice collection of passages from the best authors, in prose and verse, who have treated rural themes, accompanied by just and sympathetic original comments.

X.

WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.

William Cullen Bryant was born at Cummington, Hampshire County, Mass., November 3, 1794. His father, a physician, and a man of strength of character and literary culture, took pride in his son's early ability, and cherished the young poet with great affection. We have heard the anecdote of his reciting the poem « Thanatopsis » at the house of one of his friends, with tears in his eyes. « The father taught the son » we are told in a valuable notice of the poet's life and writings, * « the value of correctness and compression, and enabled him to distinguish between true poetic enthusiasm and fustian. »

We may here quote, the passage which follows in the article just referred to, for its personal details of the poet's family, and the apposite citations from his verse. « He, who carefully reads the poems of the man, will see how largely the boy has profited by these early lessons and will appreciate the ardent affection with which the son so beautifully repays

* An article on Bryant which appeared in the Southern Lit. Mess. for 1843. It is from the pen of Mr. James Lawson, an old friend of the poet.

the labor of the sire. The feeling and reverence with which Bryant cherishes the memory of his father, whose life was

> Marked with some act of goodness every day,

is touchingly alluded to in several poems, and directly spoken of, with pathetic eloquence, in the *Hymn to Death*, written in 1825.

> Alas! I little thought that the stern power
> Whose fearful praise I sung, would try me thus
> Before the strain was ended. I must cease. —

Again, in *To the Past*, written in 1827, from which we quote : —

> Thou hast the better years,
> Thou hast my earlier friends the good, the kind
> . . . . . .
> And then shall I behold
> Him, by whose kind paternal side I sprung,
> And her, who still and cold,
> Fills the next grave — the beautiful and young.

We have seen, too, while referring to his father, the devoted affection with which he speaks of her « who fills the next grave. » The allusion is to his sister who died of consuption in 1824. In *The death of the flowers*, written in the autumn of 1825, we have another allusion to the memory of that sister :

> And then I think of one of her youthful beauty died,
> The fair, meek blossom that grew up and faded by my side :
> . . . . . .
> — The gentle race of flowers
> Are lying in their lowly beds, with the fair and good of ours.

And in his volume there is a sonnet addressed to her, while sick she waited

> Till the slow plague shall bring the fatal hour.

Bryant early displayed the poetical faculty, and fastened upon the genial influences of nature about him. He began to write verses at nine, and at ten composed a little poem to be spoken at a public school, which was published in a country newspaper. At the age of fourteen he prepared a collection of poems, which was published at Boston in 1809. * The longest of these he entitled the Eembargo, a reflection in good set heroic measure of the prevalent. New England Anti-Jeffersonian Federalism of the times. **

This was a second and enlarged edition of the « Embargo » which had appeared the year previous in a little pamphlet by itself. It is noticeable that never since that early publication, while actively engaged in public life, has the poet employed his muse upon the politics of the day though the general topics of liberty and independence have given occasion to some of his finest poems. By the side of this juvenile production are an *Ode to Connecticut River* and some verses entitled Drought, which show a characteristic observation of nature

DROUGHT

Plunged amid the limpid waters,
Or the cooling shade beneath;
Let me fly the scorching sunbeams,
And the south wind's sickly breath!
&c. &c.

July, 1807.

---

* The Embargo or Sketches of the Times. A satire. The second edition, corrected and enlarged together with the Spanish Revolution and other Poems, By William Cullen Bryant. Boston. Printed by T. G. House, No. 5. Court Street 12mo.

** The poem received the following notice at the time from the monthly Anthology for June, 1808:—« If the young bard has met with no assistance in the composition of this poem, he certainly bids fair, should he continue to cultivate his talent, to gain a respectable station on the Parnassian mount, and to reflect credit on the literature of his country.

Bryant studied at William College, which he left to prosecute the study of the law, a profession in which he was engaged in practice at Plainfield for one year, and afterwards for nine years at Great Barrington.

In 1816 his poem of *Thanatopsis*, written in his nineteenth year was published in the North American Review. Its sonorous blank verse created a marked sensation at the time and the imitations of it have not ceased since.

A story is told of the first publication of this poem in the Review, in connection with Richard H. Dana, of which we are enabled to give the correct version. Dana was then a member of the club which conducted the Review, and received two poems, « Thanatopsis » and a « Fragment; » which now bears the title « Inscription on the Entrance to a Wood. » The first was somehow understood from the father, the other from the son. When Dana learnt the name, and that the author of Thanatopsis, Dr. Bryant, was a member of the State Legislature, he proceeded to the Senate-room to observe the new poet. He saw there a man of dark complexion, with quite dark if not black hair, thick eyebrows, well developed forehead, well featured, with an uncommonly intellectual expression, though he could not discover in it the poetic faculty. He went away puzzled and mortified at his lack of discernment. When Bryant afterwards came to Cambridge to deliver the Phi Beta Kappa poem, and Dana spoke of his father's Thanatopsis, the real author explained the matter, and became known as the writer of the two poems. In this innocent perplexity the acquaintance between these poets began.

In 1821 delivered the Phi Beta Kappa poem at Harvard, his composition entitled the Ages, a didactic poem, viewing the past world's progress by the torch-light of liberty and closing with a fair picture of American Nature, and its occupation by the new race. This he published in that year with other poems at Cambridge.

In 1825, abandoning the law for literature, he came to

New York and edited a Monthly periodical, the New York Review and Athenaeum Magazine which in 1826 was emerged in a new work of a similar character also conducted by him, the United States Review and Literary Gazette, which closed with its second volume in September of the following year. In these works appeared many just and forcible criticisms, and a number of his best Known poems, including *The Death of the Flowers*, *The Disinterred Warrior The African Chief*, The Indian Girl's Lament. These periodicals were supported by contributions from Richard H. Dana, the early friend of Bryant, who wrote both in prose and verse, by Sands, and by Halleck whose Marco Bozzaris, Burns, and Wyoming appeared in their pages. Mr. Bryant was also a contributor of several prose articles to the early volumes of the North American Review.

In 1824 a number of his poems, *The Murdered Traveller The Old Man's Funeral, The Forest Hymn*, *March*, and others, appeared in the United States Literary Gazette, a weekly Review published at Boston, at first edited by Thephilus Parsons, and afterwards by James G. Carter.

In 1826 Bryant became permanently connected with the Evening Post, Mr. Bryant published in that paper a history of that career. Its first number was dated November 16, 1801, when it was founded by William Coleman, a barrister from Massachusetts, with the support of the leading member of the Federal party, to which, till the close of the war with England, it was devoted adherent. In 1826 Mr. Bryant began to write for its columns. On the death of Coleman in 1829 William Leggett was employed, as assistant editor and remained with the paper till 1836, vhen he retired on the return of Mr. Bryant from Europe. It now remained in Mr. Bryant's sole editorial hands, assisted hy various contributors, including the regular aid ou his son-in-law, Mr. Parke Godwin, till the purchase by Mr. John Bigelow of a share of the paper in 1850, since which time he was associated in the editorship.

In the first years of his engagement in these editorial duties, Bryant wrote, in conjunction with his friends Sands and Verplank, *The Talisman*, in three annual volumes 1827-29 30; the collection entitled, « Tales of the Glauber Spa, » in 1832. His contributions to the « Talisman » besides a few poems, were an Adventure in the East Indies, The Cascade of Melsingah, Recollection of the South of Spain. A Story of the Island of Cuba, The Indian Spring, The Whirlwind, Phanette, des Gaulelms and the Marriage Blunder. He also assisted in writing The Legend of the Devil's Pulpit, and Reminiscences of New York. For the Tales of the Glauber Spa he wrote the Skeleton's Cave and Medfield. He then since from time to time published new poems in the periodicals of the day, which he collected at intervals in new editions.

In the Evening Post also appeared several series of Letters from Europe, the Southern States, and the West Indies, which mark the period of the author's travels at various times from 1834 to 1853. The last tour extended to the Holy Land. A collection of these papers was published by Putnam, entitled *Letters of a Traveller, or Notes of Things seen in Europe and America.*

Among Mr. Bryant's separate publications should be mentioned his Eulogy of his friend Thomas Cole, the artist, delivered in New York in 1848, and a similar tribute to the genius of Cooper the novelist, in 1852. The style of these addresses, and of the author's other prose writings, is remarkable for its purity and clearness. Its truthfulness, in accuracy of thought and diction, is a constant charm to those who know the value of words, and have felt the poverty of exaggerated language. This extends to the daily articles written by the author in his newspaper, where no haste or interruptions are suffered to set aside his fastidious and jealous guardianship, not merely of sincere statement but of its pure expression.

The style must have been formed at the outset by a vigorous nature, which can thus resist the usually pernicious

influences of more than a quarter of a century of editorial wear and tear.

The poems of Bryant may be classed, with regard to their subjects : — those expressing a universal interest, relative to the great conditions of humanity, as *Thanatopsis, The Ages, Hymn to Death, The Past;* types of nature symbolical of these, as the Winds; poems of a national and patriotic sentiment, or expressive of the heroic in character, as the Song of Marion's Men, the Indian Poems, and some foreign subjects mingled with translation. Of these, probably the most enduring will be those which draw their vitality more immediately from the American Soil. In these there is a purity of nature and a certain rustic grace, which speak at once the nature of the poet and his subject, Mr. Bryant had been a close student of English poetry through its several periods, and while his taste would lead him to admire those who have minutely painted the scenes of nature, his fidelity to his own thoughts and experiences preserved him from imitation of any.

Mr. Dana, in his preface to his reprint of his « Idle Man, » Speaks of a poetic influence in the early period of Bryant's career. « I shall never forget » says he, « with what feeling my friend Bryant, some years ago, * described to me the effect produced upon him by his meeting for the first time with Wordsworth's Ballads. He lived, when quite young, where but few works of poetry were to be had; at a period, too, when Pope was still the great idol of the Temple of Art. He said, that upon opening Wordsworth, a thousand springs seemed to Gush up at once in his heart, and the face of nature, of a sudden, to change into a strange freshness and life. This may have been a seed sown in a generous nature, but the predetermined quality of the soil has marked the form and fragrance of the plant. It is American air we breathe, and American nature we see in his verses, and « the plain living

* This was written in 1833.

and high thinking » of what should constitute American sentiment inspire them.

Bryant, whose songs are thoughlt that bless
  The heart, its teachcrs, and its joy,
As mothers blend with their caress,
Lessons of truth and gentleness,
  And virtue for the listening boy.
Spring's lovelier flowers for many a day,
Have blossomed on his wandering way,
Beings of beauty and decay,
  They slumber in their autumn tomb;
But those that graced his own Green River,
  And wreathed the lattice of his home,
Charmed by his song from mortal doom,
Bloom on, and will bloom on for ever. *

Mr Bryant's country residence was at Roslyn, Long Island, a picturesquely situated village on the Sound, a few hours' journey from the city. There at Home, in the immediate vicinity of numerous fine land and water views, he found retirement from the care and turmoil of metropolitan life, and there we may readily suppose his favorite woods and fields inspire the most genial moods of his poetic creations. **

In 1857 and the following year, Mr Bryant made the tour of Europe, with his family, visiting France, Switzerland, and various provinces of Spain, where he passed the winter, extending hls journey thence to Algiers, and passing some time in Italy previons to his return home. The objects of interest which he met with on his route, were occasionally made the topics of correspondence with his journal, the *Evening Post;* and a collection of these letters was published in 1859 entitled : *Letters from Spain and other Countries* being a second series of the author's *Letters of a Traveller.* The style is marked by the neatness and simplicity, accuracy of thought,

* Lines by Halleck, in his poem, « The Recorder. »

** Bryant Homestead-Book, by Julia Hatfield, 1869.

fidelity of statement, and purity of expression, which characterize all this author's writings, whether in prose or poetry.

At the request of the New York Historical Society, Mr. Bryant, in the Spring of 1860 delivered an address at the Academy of Music, in New York on *The Life, Character, and Genius* of Washington Irving. The time chosen for the celebration was the 3d. of April, the first recurrence of Mr Irving's birthday, a few months after his decease. Mr Bryant, in this production, reviewed his friend Mr Irving's career, with occasional illustrations from his own recollections of the earlier history of literature in New York. It was a genial tribute to the merits of the author and the man. In a glowing passage, at the close, he predicted the lasting fame of his subject.

« Other hands, » said he « will yet give the world a bolder, more vivid, and more exact portraiture. In the mean time, when I consider for how many years he stood before the world as an author, with a still increasing fame — half a century in this most changeful of centuries — I cannot hesitate to predict for him a deathless renown, since he began to write, empires have risen and passed away; mighty captains have appeared on the stage of the world, performed their part, and been called to their account; wars have been fought and ended which have changed the destinies of human race. New Arts have been invented and adopted, and have pushed the old out of use; the household economy of half mankind has undergone a revolution. Science has learned a new dialect and forgotten the old; the chemist of 1807 would be a vain babbler among his brethren of the present day, and would in turn become bewildered in the attempt to understand them. Nation utters speech to nation in words that pass from realm to realm with the speed of light. Distant countries have been made neighbors; the Atlantic Ocean has become a narrow frith, and the old world and the new shake hands across it; the East and West look in at each other's windows. The new inventions bring new calamities, and men perish in crowd by the recoil of their own devices. War has learned more frightful modes

of havoc, and armed itself with deadlier weapons; armies are borne to the battle field on the wings of the wind, and dashed against each other and destroyed with infinite bloodshed. We grow giddy with this perpetual whirl of strange events, these rapid and ceaseless mutations; the earth seems to reel under our feet, and we turn to those who write like Irving, for some assurance that we are still in the same world into which we were born; we read, and are quieted and consoled. In his pages we see that the language of the heart never becomes obsolete; that Truth and Good and Beauty, the offspring of God, are not subject to the changes which beset the empire of man. We become satisfied that he whose works were the delight of our fathers, and are still ours, will be read with the same pleasnre, by those who come after us. »

A new volume of poems was published by Mr Bryant in 1864. It was simply entitled, *Thirty Poems.* These poems are varied in manner and subject, and exhibit the author's powers in the several departments which he long since made his own. Foremost among these are poems descriptive of nature, taking some simple scene or incident of rural life, and associating it with the human feelings to which it ministers, or of which it is typical. The reader will remember various instances of this in the author's previous volumes, in « The Fountain, » « The Winds, » and other poems. Here is very happily illustrated in the poem, « The Planting of the Apple-Tree » in « A Rain Dream » « The Snow-Shower, » « The Night Journey of a River, » and particularly in « The song of the Sower, » a truly American poem, honoring the wide extended labors of the husbandman, by linking them with the beauty and utility which reside in them and flow from them, in a thousand, channels of beneficence. The poem is full of imaginative sympathy, and abounds with lofty, heroic expression. Here is exhibited the beauty of natural scenery, which is sown in Autumn under the wintry clod, and appears in the effulgence of Spring:

« Fling wide generous grain; we fling
O'er the dark mould the green of spring,
For thick the emerald blades shall grow,
When first the March winds melt the snow,
And to the sleeping flowers below
The early blue birds sing.

« Fling wide the grain: we give the fields
The ears that nod in summer's gale,
The shining stems that summer gilds,
The harvest that o'erflows the vale,
And swells, an amber sea, between
The full-leaved woods, its shores of green. »

Presently a stirring suggestion of a battlefield, for to that fierce contrast to his pursuits the sower is ministering:

Fling wide the golden shower: we trust
The strength of armies to the dust;
This peaceful lea may haply yield
Its harvest for the tented field.
Ha! feel ye not your finger's thrill,
As o'er them, in the yellow grains,
Glide the warm drops of blood that fill
For mortal strife the warrior's veins;
Such as, on Solferino's day,
Slaked the brown sand and flowed away; —
Flowed till the herds on Mincio's brink
Snuffed the red stream and feared to drink? —
Blood that in deeper pools shall lie
On the sad earth, as Time grows gray,
When men by deadlier art shall die,
And deeper darkness blot the sky
Above the thundering fray;
And realms, that here the battle-cry,
Shall sicken with dismay;
And chieftains to the war shall lead
Whole nations, with the tempest's speed,
To perish in a day; —
Till man, by love and mercy taught,
Shall rue the wreck his fury wrought,

And lay the sword away.
Oh, strew with pausing, shuddering hand,
The seed upon the helpless land,
As if, at every step, ye cast
The pelting hail and riving blast. »

Then we have in succession the vast tribes of the artisan and the manufacturer, for whom the husbandman is unconsciously at work — a glimpse of the tempest-tossed mariner seeking food on the shore; of the lost wanderer escaping from the desert; of the charity-nurtured poor of great cities, and holiest of all, of man, longing for immortality:

« The mystic loaf that crowns the boards,
When round the table of their Lord,
Within a thousand temples set,
In memory of the bitter death
Of Him who taught at Nazareth,
His followers are met.
And thoughtful eyes with tears are wet,
As of the Holy One they think,
The glory of whose rising, yet
Makes bright the grave's mysterious brink. »

In another of these poems, « An Invitation to the Country » there are two stanzas most felicitously expressed, worthy to be taken as a motto of the author's volumes in his interpretation of Nature. They follow an animated picture of the writer's rural home in spring-time, addressed to his daughter:

« Yet these sweet sounds of the early season
And these fair sights of its sunny days.
Are only sweet when we fondly listen,
And only fair when we fondly gaze.

« There is no glory in star of blossom,
Till looked upon by a loving eye;
There is no fragrance in April breezes,
Tell breathed with joy as they wander by. »

This is one class of poems. Another is more purely personal, revealing the author's feelings in period of trial or suffer-

ing, as in « The Cloud on the Way, » and « The Life that is » which seem to refer to the sickness and recovery of one dear to him as a life. We can only refer to them here; the thoughtful reader will not pass them over, or fail to observe their passionate history. Then, again, we have several of those national and patriotic lyrics which no one has written with more strength and delicacy, with more of conscious power, with less of vain glory. « Not Yet » and « Our Country's Call » are poems of the war, well known to American readers. « Italy » fully deserves to be ranked with them — a noble lyric, instinct with life, which, on its appearance, was translated into the language of the country it celebrates and doubtless has aided to foster the genius of Italian liberty.

There are other poems in this collection which we would not willingly pass over. Two we must mention: « The ruin of Italica, » a spirited translation from the Spanish Rioja full of the eloquent melancoly of departed historic greatness; and an elaborate version of the entire fifth book the Odyssey. The latter is in blank verse, and, the writer tells us, is an attempted improvement, in simplicity, at least upon the translation on Cowper, in which, he says, « Almost every sentence is stiffened by some clumsy inversion, and stately phrases are used when simpler one were at hand. » A few lines of each version will illustrate this. In the opening of the book, it will be remembered, Minerva calls the attention of Jupiter to the detention of Ulysses by Calypso, in her enchanted island. Sovereign Jove is aroused, and sends Mercury with a message for his release. Here is the messenger on his journey. First Cowper:

« He ended, nor the Argicide refused,
Messenger of the skies; his sandals fair,
Ambrosial, golden, to his feet he bound,
Which o'er the moist wave, rapid as the wind,
Bear him, and o'er the illimitable earth,
Then took his rod, with which, at will all eyes
He closes soft, or opens them wide again,

« So armed, forth flew the valiant Argicide,
Alighting on Pieria down he stooped
To ocaan and the billows lightly, skimmed
In form a sea-mew, such as the bays
Tremendous of the barren Deep her food
Seeking, dips in brine her ample wing. »

And now Bryant :

« He spake, the herald Argicide obeyed
And hastily beneath his feet he bound
The fair, ambrosial, golden sandals, worn
To bear him over ocean like the wind,
And o'er the boundless land. His wand he took,
Wherewith he softly seals the eyes of men,
And opens them at will from Sleep. With this
In hand, the mighty Argos — queller flew,
And lighting on Pieria, from the sky
Plunged downward to the deep, and skimmed its face
Like hovering sea-mew, that on the broad gulfs
Of the unfruitful ocean seeks her prey,
And often dips her opinions in the brine,
So Hermes flew along the waste of waves. »

Mr Bryant here certainly keeps his word, he gets rid of the inversions, and uses simpler language. The book, as a whole, in his version runs very smoothly, and tempts us to wish that he would extend labors further. If Homer cannot be reproduced with all his original spirit in this way, of which we may despair — for he is really nntranslatable in any way — still a very delightful poem might be added to our literature with a satisfactory addition to Mr. Bryant's reputation. There was a general stir in this direction among his brethren in Europe. Alfred Tennyson published a specimen of the *Iliad* in blank verse, a celebrated passage of the eighth book, which may be studied in his version for the nicety and beauty of his picked phraseology, and the portion of Homeric strength infused into it ; and Lord Derby has given to the world a translation of the entire poem in blank verse, remarkable

for its spirit, ease, simplicity, and general fidelity. It is much to Mr. Bryant's credit that he led the way in this work, which promised a revival of the study of Homer, with a higher popular appreciation of his great and peculiar merits.

Mr. Bryant, we may add, still directed, with his accustomed ability and energy, the editorial columns of the *Evening Post.* The duties of this office, in the political crisis through which the country had just passed, required equal forethought, nerve, and prudence; qualities associated with high principle, which Mr. Bryant always brings to his responsible employment. As a leader of the party which triumphed in the election of Mr. Lincoln, his services and influence were undoubtedly great, and he was worthly chosen to head the ticked of electors of the state ot New York. During the war, and at its close, his muse has pointed the moral of the conflict, and animated the hearts of his countrymen in several poems, marked by his characteristic simplicity and force of thought, natural illustration, and purity of diction. The following bears date July, 1861:

« Not Yet. »

« O country, marvel of the earth!
O realm to sudden greatness grown!
The age that gloried in thy birth,
Shall it behold thee overthrown?
Shall traitors lay that greatness low?
No, Land of Hope and Blessing, No!
&c. &c. —

Mr. Bryant's *Letters from the East* published in 1869, were written, as the preface states « in the course of a visit made to the Old World in the closing months of the year 1852, and the first six months of the following year. « His tour lay from London to Paris and across France to Genoa on the Mediterreanean, from when he sailed to Naples, and then passed to Malta. Entering Egypt at Cairo, he sailed

up the Nile to the Lower Cataract, and on his return crossed the Little Desert, by a ten days' jurney, to Jerusalem. His homeward route was by way of Smyrna, Constantinople, and Athen, to Rome, Venice, and Paris.

About this time Mr. Bryant contributed to the New York *Ledger* a translation of a story from the Spanish of Carolina Coronado — since Mrs. Perry — and entitled *Jarilla* from the name of the heroine. She was a Moorish maiden, though educated by her mother in the Christian faith, belonging to a family who yet professed the career of Mahomet, and several of whom, after the banishment and persecution of their race, still lurked in the mountains and woody solitudes of Estremadura. Several of the personages of the tale are Moors. There is a love plot interwoven with the story, which has a sad termination, wrought up with a good deal of pathos.

In 1870 Bryant gave to the English reading world a translation of the *Iliad* in blank verse. This work cost four years of labor and served as a diversion from a great domestic sorrow. As a whole, it is acknowledged to be the best and most attractive version that the language yet possesses.

His aims are so clearly and exactly defined in the Introduction, that a few selected sentences, supplemented by a quotation from a standard critical authority, will fittingly outline the spirit of the work. « I have endeavored to be strictly faithful in my rendering, to add nothing of my own, and to give the reader, so far as the language would allow, all that I found in the original. » An exception to this rule, and that merely apparent, is the occasional omission or certain epithets, « which are merely a kind of poetical finery, introduced when they are convenient to fill out a line, or to give it a sonorous termination, and omitted when they are not needed for this purpose. » In another point of chief importance equal pains where taken. « I have endeavored to preserve the simplicity of style which distinguishes the old Greek poet, who wrote for the popular ear and according to the genius of his language, and I have chosen such English as offers no

violence to the ordinary usages and structure of our own. I have sought to obtain what belongs to the original — a fluent narrative style, which shall carry the reader forward without the impediment of unexpected inversions and capricious phrases, and in which, if he finds nothing to stop at and admire, there will at least be nothing to divert his attention from the story and the characters of the poem, from the events related and the objects described. » English hexameters were discarded and blank verse was chosen as the measure of this translation, for the reason that the Greek hexameters could not be so rendered line for line. Several choice specimens of the former measure are elsewhere given in the rendering from Homer by the late J. G. Percival.

« Mr. Bryant has long been known, by his original poems, as resembling the old epic poets, in his language, more than any other living writer of English. It may be said that contemporary poets have excelled his verses; one in splendor, another in suggestiveness another in fullness of knowledge and in reach of thought, more than one in nearness to the great mental conflicts of the age; but he has certainly not been surpassed, perhaps not approached, by any writer since. Wordsworth, in that majestic repose and that self-reliant simplicity which characterized the morning stars of song. He has adhered to the permanent elements in our language; and the common perversions in the meanings of good old words, which make it so nearly impossible even for most men of culture to write a sentence that Chaucer could have understood, seem to be unknown to him. No qualification for a translator of Homer could be more essential than this; and a reader who has duly considered its importance will find that it has given Mr. Bryant's translation a vast superiority over all others. The simplicity of Professor Newman's ballad verse is gained only by the sacrifice of dignity; that of the writers of English hexameters is mere baldness; even that of Lord Derby is habitually weak forced, and halting; but that of Mr. Bryant is at once majestic and direct, at once noble, rapid and vigorous; it has in a large degree the simplicity of Homer... There is no other English Iliad which could be made by corrections to represent Homer, on the whole, as well as Mr. Bryant represents him now;

and until that distant day, when a poet no les eminent than he shall, with fuller knowledge and before a world of richer intelligence, be content to give his maturest years of labor to the singing of these old songs again, Mr. Bryant's trauslation will surely be recognized wherever our mother tongue is read as its best echo of the old Greek poet. » *

The Iliad was followed in 1871-72 by the Odyssey. In the less tumultuous scenes of the latter, some critics have thought that Mr. Bryant have achieved a triumph perhaps even greater. These two gifts in American literature are alike remarkable for a grand simplicity, as well as for a vonderful clearness, ease, and absorbing interest of narrative.

Mr. Bryant coutributed an Introduction to J. B. Ford's *Library of Poetry and Song*, published in 1871. In the same year appeared a « *Red Line* » edition of his *Poems: Collected and arranged* by the *Author*. A volume of his Orations and Addresses was published in 1873. A work entitled *Picturesque America* superbly illustrated also appeared under his editorship.

To the Christmas season of 1872 he contributed *The Little People of the snow* which was brought out in a dainty volume, with choice illustration by Alfred Fredericks. This imaginative poem, in the guise of a tale to children by the winter fireside, tells how a little child had been beguiled into the haunts of the « Little People of the Snow » to whom:

« The sun's warm beams were shafts of fine
And the soft south wind was the winds of death ».

* North American Review, April 1871.

She heedlessly passed into an underground garden of these elves, where

« They taught the silent frost
To mock, in stem and spray, and leaf and flower ;
The growths of summer. Here the palm uproared
Its white columnar trunk and spotless sheaf
Of plume-like leaves; here cedars, huge as those
In Lebanon, stretched far their level boughs,
Yet pale and shadowless; a sturdy oak
Stood with its huge gnarled roots of seeming strength
Fast anchored in the glistening bank, light sprays
Of myrtle, roses in their bud and bloom
Drooped by the winding walks; — yet all seemed wrought
Of stainless alabaster — up the trees
Ran the little jessamine, with stalkand leaf
Colorless as her flowers. »

At last the little wanderer :

« Slept in death; for when the power of Frost
Locks up the motions of the living frame,
The victim passes to the realm of death
Through the dim porch of sleep. »

But after the burial of Eva by her friends never more

« The Little People of the Snow were seen
By human eye, nor ever human ear
Heard from their lips articulate speech again,
For a decree went forth to cut them off
Forever from communion with mankind. ».

Twice in late years was Mr. Bryant called upon to deliver commemorative discourses, before the New York Historical Society, on the lives and works of literary friends. These discourses elsewhere noted, have been privately printed under these titles : *Some Notices of the Life and Writings of Fitz-Green Halleck*, 1869; and *A discourse on the Life Character and Writings of Gulian Crommelin.* Verplanck, 1870.

His *Popular History of the U. States* appeared in 1874. At that time he was 80 years old, and his jubilee was celebrated, he being presented with a fine silver vase.

Two years later, the Russian Academy appointed him as one of his members, and that was the last honor he was rewarded with, for on the 12th of June 1878 at the age of 84, mostly spent in behalf of his beloved country and the American literature, he disappeared from the stage of this world, deeply mourned by his fellow citezens and all learned men.

XI.

GEORGE BANCROFT.

George Bancroft, the eminent American historian was born at Worcester Massachausetts, in the year 1800. His father, Aaron Bancroft, was the distinguished Congregationalist clergyman of that place. He took particular care of his son's education, which was pursued at the Academy of Dr. Abbot, at Exeter, New Hampshire. A contemporary letter, dated October 10, 1811, written by the eminent Dr. Nathan Parker, of Portsmouth, to Dr. Bancroft, records a visit to the school with special mention of the promising George.

« I have this day » writes this friend of the family, « made a visit at Exeter and spent an hour with George. I found him in good health, and perfectly satisfied with his situation. He appears to enter into the studies which he is pursuing with ardor and laudable ambition which gives promise of distinction, and which must be peculiarly grateful to a parent. I conversed with him on his studies, and found him very ready to make discriminating remarks — and as much as I expected from him. I was surprised at the intelligence with which he conversed and the maturity of mind which he discovered. ***** I found that he had become acquainted with the distinctions which are conferred on those who excel, and

was desirous of obtaining them. I was much pleased with the zeal which he discovered on this subject. He said there were prizes distributed every year, or every term, (I forgot which), to those who excelled in particular studies. He expressed a great desire to obtain one, but said he was afraid he should not succeed, for he was the youngest but three in the academy, and he did not think he should gain a prize, but he would try. These you may say, are trifling things, but they discover a disposition of mind, with which I think you must be gratified. I made inquiries of Mr. Abbot concerning him. He observed that he was a very fine lad; that he appeared to have the stamina of a distinguished man; that he took his rank among the first scholars in the academy, and that he wished I would send him half a dozen such boys. »

The word of promise thus spoken to the father's ear has not been broken to the world.

In 1817, before he had completed his seventeenth year, the youth received his degree of Bachelor of Arts at Cambridge. The next year he went to Europe, and studied at Gottingen and Berlin, where he availed himself of the best opportunities of literary culture presented by these eminent Universities. Before his return to America, in 1822, he had made the tour of England, Switzerland, Germany, and Italy. His mind was not richly furnished with the treasures of ancient literature with the superadded modern metaphysical culture of the German Universities. The thoroughness of his studies is shown in the philosophical summaries of Roman history and policy, and of the literature of Germany, then rapidly gaining the ascendant, which he not long after published in America; while a thin volume of poems, published at Boston in 1823, witnesses to his poetical enthusiasm for the arts and nature, as he traversed the ruins of Italy and the sublime scenery of Switzerland. He also at this time, from his eighteenth to his twentyfourth year, wrote a series of poetical translations of some of the chief minor poems of Shiller, Goethe, and other German authors, which appeared

in the North American Review, and were afterwards revived by the author in his Collection of Miscellanies. He also wrote for the early volumes of Walsh's American Quarterly Review, a number of articles, marked by their academic and philosophic spirit; among others, a striking paper of the Doctrine of Temperaments; a kindred philosophical Essay of Ennui; and papers on Poland and Russia, of historical sagacity and penetration.

Immediately on his return to the United States, Mr. Bancroft had been appointed tutor of Greek at Harvard, where he continued for a year; subsequently carrying out his plans of education, in connexion with his friend Dr. J. G. Cogswell, as principal of the Round Hill school, at Northampton, Massachusetts.

Mr. Bancroft early became a politician, attaching himself to the Democratic party. One of the fruits of his promotion of its interests was his appointment from President Van Buren, in 1838, to the collectorship of the port of Boston. He retained this office till 1841. In 1844 he was the candidate of the Democratic minority, in Massachusetts, for the office of Governor. He was invited by President Polk in 1845, to a seat in the Cabinet as Secretary of the Navy, the duties of which he discharged with his customary energy and efficiency in the cause of improvement. The next year he was appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to Great Britain, and held this distinguished position till 1849. He then returned to the United States, and became a resident to the city of New York.

Here he established his home, and here he is to be met with in the fashionable, literary and political circles of the city. He filled the office of President of the American Ethnolohical and New York Historical Societies; and on several occasions appeared as a public orator, in connexion with these and other liberal interests of the City. His summers were passed at his country-seat at Newport, Rhode Island.

The most important work of Mr. Bancroft's literary ca-

reer, his *History of the United States, from the Discovery of American Continent*, appeared in a first volume, in 1834. It struck a new vein in American History original in design and conception. Terse and pointed in style, in brief, ringing sentences, it took the subject out of the hands of mere annalists and commentators, and raised it to the dignity and interest of philosophical narration. The original preface stamped the character of the work, in its leading motives, the author's sense of its importance and his reliance on the energetic industry which was to accomplish it. The picturesque account of the colonial period gave the public the first impression of the author's vivid narrative; while the tribute to Roger Williams was an indication of the allegiance to the principles of liberty which was to characterize the work. The second and third followed, frequently appearing in new editions.

The interval of Mr. Bancroft's absence in Europe was profitably employed in the prosecution of his historical studies, for which his rank of ambassador gave him new facilities of original research in the government archives of London and Paris. Approaching the revolutionary period he was at that stage of the narrative where this aid became of the utmost importance. It was freely rendered. The records of the State Paper Office of Great Britain, including a vast array of military and civil correspondence, and legal and commercial detail, were freely placed at his disposal by the Earl of Aberdeen, Viscount Palmerston, Earl Grey, and the Duke of New-Castle, who then held the office of Secretary of State. The records of the Treasury, with its series of Minutes and Letter Books, were, in like manner, opened by Lord John Russell; while in the British Museum and in the private collections of various noble families, the most interesting manuscripts were freely rendered to the historian. Among the latter were the papers of Chatham, the Earl of Shelburne, the Duke of Grafton, the Earl of Dartmouth, and several hundred notes which passed between George the third and Lord North.

M. Guizot, the French minister, extended similar courtesies in Paris, where Mr. Bancroft was aided by Mr. Mignet Mr. Lamartine, and de Tocqueville. The relations of America with other European States of the Continent were also examined.

In addition to these resources abroad, the progress of his work secured to Mr. Bancroft at home frequent valuable opportunities of the examination of original authorities in private and public collections in all parts of the country. Among these are the numerous manuscripts of the apostle of American liberty, Samuel Adams.

Thus armed, and with the daily increasing resources of the already vast American historical library, fed by a thousand rills of publication of biography, family memoirs, town and state histories, and the numerous modes of antiquarian development, Mr. Bancroft enters on each successive volume of his national work with an increased momentum. Resuming the record of 1852 with the publication of the fourth volume, which traces the period from 1748, the author advanced rapidly to the fifth and sixth the last of which, bringing the narrative to the immediate commencement of the Revolution preceding the actual outbreak in Massachusetts, appeared in 1854. Here, on the threshold of the new era, the author pauses for a while; we may be sure to gather new strength for the approaching conflict.

The speciality of Mr. Bancroft's history is its prompt recognition and philosophical development of the elements of liberty existing in the country, from the settlement of the first colonists to the matured era of independence. He traces this spirit in the natural conditions of the land, in men and events. History, in his view, is no accident or chance concurrence of incidents, but an organic growth which the actors control, and to which they are subservient. The nation became free, he maintains, from the necessity of the human constitution, and because it deliberately willed to be free. To this end, in his view, all thoughts, all passions, all de-

lights ministered. To detect this prevailing influence, this hidden impulse to the march of events, in every variety of character, in every change of position, whether in the town meeting of New England or the parliament of England; whether in the yeoman or the governor; in the church or at the bar; in the habits of the sailor or of the pioneer; in the rugged independence of New England or the uneasy sufferance of Louisiana; this is our historian's main idea. The ardor of the pursuit may sometimes bend reluctant facts to its purpose, and the keener eye of retrospection may read with more certainty what lurked dimly in anticipation; but the main deduction is correct. The history of America is the history of liberty. The author never relaxed his grasp of this central law. Hence the manly vigor and epic grandeur of his story.

With the leading idea Mr. Bancroft associates the most minute attention to detail. His page is crowded with facts brought forward with the air of realities of the time. He does not disdain to cite in his text the very words of the old actors as they were uttered in the ballad, the sermon, the speech, or the newspaper of the day. This gives verisimilitude to his story. It is a history of the people as well as of the State.

In 1855 Mr. Bancroft published a volume of *Literary and Historical Miscellanies*, containing a portion of his early Essays from the Reviews, his poetical translations from the German; several historical articles to which we have alluded, and a few occasional discourses, including an address in memory of Channing, in 1842; an oration commemorative of Andrew Jackson, spoken at Washington in 1845, and the eloquent discourse at the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the New York Historical society, on « The Necessity, the Reality, and the promise of the Progress of the Human Race »—topics which were handled by the light both of modern science and philosophy.

To this enumeration of Mr. Bancroft's writings we may

add an Abridgment of his History of the Colonization of the United States; and among other speeches and addresses, a lecture on « The Culture, the Support, and the Object of Art in a Republic, » in the course of the New York Historical Society in 1852; and another before the Mechanics' Institute of New York 1853, on « The Office, Appropriate Culture, and Duty of the Mechanic. »

In 1858, Mr. Bancroft continued the publication of his *History of the United States from the discovery of the American Continent*, with a seventh volume, opening the era of the War of Independence. It commences with the year 1774, the review of the foreign political relations of the struggle in Great Britain and France; traces the growth and progress of the spirit of resistance in the several colonies, with the contemporary parliamentary history, and terminates with a vivid recital of the battle of Bunker Hill, June 17, 1775. An eighth volume, the second devoted to the Revolution, appeared in 1860, pursuing the story with great fidelity through the windings of state-craft and diplomacy at home and abroad, to the final stand taken by the country in the Declaration of Independence.

In the prosecution of this work, Mr. Bancroft spares no labor, or diligence of research. Great stores of manuscripts, collected by himself or generously placed at his disposal, the material derived from his privileged examination of the archives of England and France, the vast resources of his valuable historical library; the fruits of his philosophical and political studies of the books of ancient and modern writers, are all brought to bear in the composition of this standard work. It includes in its field the politics of Europe as well as of America. The number of incidents multiplies as the narrative proceeds, and the activity of a whole continent is poured into the historic page. But the zeal and enthusiasm of the author keep pace with the work. His condensation is, if possible, more spirited as his vivid genius marshals his vast array of facts into order, force and beauty. New op-

portunities of character-painting arise as the action becomes more complicated, and these are met with great acuteness, nicety of discrimination, and power of expression. The European portion of these later volumes, written from original materials, is of peculiar interest.

In october, 1855, Mr. Bancroft took part in the celebration of the battle of King's Mountain, on the site of the conflict, in South Carolina, delivering a brief address, which has been published by the side of that of the orator of the day, the Hon. John S. Preston, in a narrative of the proceedings. He was also called upon to deliver the address at the inauguration of the statue of Oliver Hazard Perry, at Cleveland, Ohio, on the anniversary of the battle of Lake Erie, September 10, 1860.

On the death of the Historian Prescott in 1859, Mr. Bancroft read a eulogium of his friend before the New York Historical Society, and at the close of the same year paid a similar tribute, in the same hall, to the memory of Washington Irving.

A paper, read by Mr. Bancroft before the New York Historical Society, on the life and genius of Jonathan Edwards, the metaphysician and divine, attracted much attention. It is published in Appleton's Cyclopaedia, as a memoir of the eminent divine.

In 1865, Mr. Bancroft, at the request of the authorities of New York, delivered a eulogy on Abraham Lincoln, on occasion of the reception of the remains of the deceased President in the city.

Another oration in honor of the martyr President was delivered by invitation, at Washington, in February, 1866, before Congress and the members of the diplomatic corps. *

---

* Memorial Address on the life of Abraham Lincoln, 8vo. Government Printing Office, Washington, 1866.

In the same year appeared, the ninth volume of Mr. Bancroft's *History of the United States.* This traced the course of civil, military, and diplomatic achievements, from the formal establishment of the Confederation in July, 1776, past the disastrous battle of Long Island, and the evacuation of New York city, the brilliant campaign in New Jersey, and the Surrender of Burgoyne, ending with the alliance of France with America in 1778. It contained the promise that another volume would complete the American Revolution, including the negotiations for peace in 1782.

The strictures therein made on the character of Joseph Reed, led to a series of controversial pamphlets with his grandson, Mr. William B. Reed of Philadelphia. * Other rejoinders to statements in the eighth and ninth volumes also appeared from Boston ** and New York. ***

Mr. Bancroft was appointed Minister to the court of Berlin in 1867. His sojourn abroad has been marked by the bestowal of several honors justly due to his consummate scholarship and historical reputation. The honorary degree of Doctor of Laws was conferred on him by the University of Bonn at its semi-centennial jubilee in 1868, when his name stood second only to the King's, and in company with such scholars as Ferdinand Grimm, Charles Darwin, John Stuart Mill, Frederick Muller, etc. Two years later the fiftieth anniversary of his Doctorate of Philosophy was celebrated by his

---

* 1. President Reed of Pennsylvania: a reply to Mr. George Bancroft and Others. Phila, February 1867; 8vo. pp. 132. — 2. Joseph Reed: A Historical Essay, by George Bancroft. New York, 1867; 8vo., pp. 64. — 3. A Rejoinder to Mr. Bancroft's Historical Essay on President Reed. Phila. 1867; 8vo., pp. 114.

** Nathanael Greene: an Examination of some Statements concerning Major Greene, in the Ninth Volume of Bancroft's History of the United States. By George Washington Greene. Boston, 1867; 8vo., pp. 66.

*** Correspondence and Remarks upon Bancroft's History of the Northern Campaign of 1777, and the Character of Major-General Philip Schuyler. By George L. Schuyler. New York, 1867; 8vo., pp. 47. Also, Lossing's Life and Times of General Philip Schuyler, 2 vols., 1872.

friends in Berlin. In this diplomatic position, he rendered several notable services to his country. He negotiated a treaty with the North German Confederation, which acknowledged the release from their native allegiance of all German emigrants who became naturalized citizens of the United States. His labors were so valuable in securing the arbitration and favorable award of the Emperor of Germany in the establishment of the boundary line between Vancouver's Island and Vashington Territory through the Haro Channel, as to receive this marked commendation from President Grant, in his Message of 1872 : —

« Mr. Bancroft, the representative of this Government at Berlin, conducted the case and prepared the statement on the part of the United States with the ability that his past services justified the public in expecting at his hand. As a member of the Cabinet at the date of the treaty which has given rise to the discussion between the two governments, as a Minister to Great Britain, when the construction now pronounced unfounded was first advanced, and as the agent and representative of the Government to present the case and to receive the award, he has been associated with the question in all of its phases, and in every stage has manifested a patriotic zeal and earnestness in maintenance of the claim of the United States. He is entitled to much credit for the success which has attended the submission. »

In 1874 Mr. Bancroft yielded his place of Ambassador at Berlin, to his nephew, Mr. Davis Bancroft, and retired in Boston to a private life. He continued the publication of his *History*, under the title of *The American Revolution* and consequently of History of the United States, which came at an end in 1874.

Mr. Bancroft's last work bears the title of « A plea for the Constitution of the United States, wounded in the house of its guardians, » and was published in 1886.

After a long, active life, spent almost entirely to the benefit of his country and his favorite studies, Mr. Bancroft left this world in 1891, at the age of 91 years.

XII.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

Was born in Portland, Maine, February 27th 1807, « in an old square wooden house, upon the edge of the sea. » He entered Bowdoin College where in due time he was graduated in the class with Hawthorne, in 1825. He wrote verses at this time for the *United States Literary Gazette* printed at Boston.

During his college life he wrote several pieces some of which possessed in great perfection the characteristics which have rendered him so universal a favorite. Among them are, the *Burial of the Minnesink, and the Hymn of the Moravian Nuns of Bethlhem at the Consecration of Palaski's Banner.*

For a short time after leaving college, he studied law in the office of his father, the Hon. Stephen Longfellow; but soon fell into the mode of life he ever since pursued as a scholar, by the appointment to a Professorship of Modern Languages in his college, to accomplish himself for which he travelled abroad in 1826, making the usual tour of the continent, including Spain. He was absent three years; on his return, he lectured at Bowdoin College, as Professor of Modern Languages and Literature, and wrote articles for the North American Review, papers on Philip Sidney, and other topics

of polite literature. One of these, an Essay on the Moral and Devotional Poetry of Spain, included his noble translation of the stanzas of the Soldier poet Manrique on the death of his father. *

He also at this time penned the Sketches of travel in *Outre Mer*, commencing the publication after the manner of Irving, in his Sketch Book; but before the work was completed in this form, it was intrusted to the Harpers, who issued it entire in two volumes.

The elegance of the manner, the nice phrases and fanciful illustrations — a certain decorated poetical style — with the many suggestions of fastidious scholarship, marked this in the eye of the public as a book of dainty promise.

In 1835, Mr. Ticknor having resigned his Professorship of Modern Languages and Literature in Harvard, Mr. Longfellow was chosen his successor. He now made a second tour to Europe, preliminary to entering upon his new duties, visiting the northern kingdoms of Danemark, Sweden, Holland, and afterward Switzerland.

Shortly after assuming his engagement at Harvard, he established himself, in 1837, as a lodger in the Cragie House, the Washington Head Quarter, which became his own by purchase, and the past traditions and present hospitality of which have some time ago been celebrated by an appreciative pen. **

It is from this genial residence, the outlook from which had furnished many a happy epithet and incident of the poet's verse, that *Hyperion, a Romance*, was dated in 1839, a dainty volume perfecting the happy promises of Outre Mer. Old European tradition, the quaint and picturesque of the past, are revived in its pages, by a modern sentiment and winning trick of the fancy, which will long secure the attractiveness

---

* This was published in a volume by Allen & Ticknor in 1833, with some translations of Sonnets by Lope de Vega and others,

** G. W. Curtis, in the « Homes of American Authors. »

of this pleasant volume. It was always a scholar's instinct with Longfellow to ally his poetical style to some rare subject of fact or the imagination worthy of treatment; and those good services which he rendered to history, old poets, and ancient art will serve him with posterity, which asks for fruit, while the present is sometimes contented with leaves.

The first volume of original poetry published by Longfellow, was the *Voices of the Night* at Cambridge in 1839. It contained the « Psalm of Life » the « Midnight mass for the Dying Year, » the Manrique translation, and a number of the Gazette. It at once became popular many of its stanzas, eloquently expressive of moral courage or passive sentiment, veins since frequently worked in his poems, as Excelsior and Resignation, being fairly adopted as « household words. » *Ballads and other Poems*, and a thin volume of *Poems on Slavery*, followed in 1842. The former has the translation in hexameters of « The Children of the Lord Supper », from the Swedish of Bishop Tegner. Other delicate cream-colored volumes came on in due sequence. *The Spanish Student*, a play in three acts, in 1843; *The Belfry of Bruges* in 1846; *Evangeline*, *A Tale of Acadie*, a happy employment of the hexameter, the next year; *Kavanagh; A Tale* an idyllic prose companion, in 1849; *The Seaside and the Fireside*, in 1850; and that quaint anecdotal poem of the middle ages in Europe, *The Golden Legend,* in 1851. These with two volumes of minor poems from favorite sources, entitled *The Waif and The Estray*, prefaced each by a poetical introduction of his own, with a collection, *The Poets and Poetry of Europe*, in 1845, complete the list of Longfellow's publications to 1854; though some of his finest poems afterwards appeared in Putman's Magazine, to which he was a frequent contributor — . In 1854 he resigned his Professorship at Harward.

The same general characteristics run through all Mr. Longfellow's productions. They are the work of a scholar, of a man of taste, of a fertile fancy; and of a loving heart. He is « a picked man » of books, and sees the world and life

by their light. To interest his imagination the facts around him must be invested with this charm of association. It is at once his aid and his merit that he can reproduce the choice pictures of the past and of other minds with new accessories of his own; to that the quaint old poets of Germany, the singers of the past centuries, the poetical vision and earnest teachings of Goethe, and the every-day humors of Jean Paul, as it were, go to live in American homes and landscape. This interpretation in its highest forms is one of the rarest benefits which the scholar can bestow upon his country. The genius of Longfellow has given us an American Idyl, based on a touching episode of ante-revolutionary history, parallel with the Hermann and Dorothea of Goethe, and the Louise of Woss; in the exquisite story of Evangeline; has shown us how Richter might have surveyed the higher and inferior conditions, the schoolmaster, the clergyman, the lovers, and the rustics of a New England village in his tale of Kavanagh; has reproduced the simple elegance of the lighter Spanish drama in his play of the Student; and in his Golden Legend has carried us, in his ingenious verse, to the heart of the Middle Ages, showing us the most poetic aspect of the lives of scholars, churchmen and villagers, — how they sang, travelled, practised logic, medicine, and divinity, and with what miracle plays, jest, and grim literature they were entertained. His originality and peculiar merit consist in these felicituous transformations. If he were simply a scholar, he would be but an analist or an annotator; but being a poet of taste and imagination with an ardent sympathy for all good and refined traits in the world, and for all forms of the objective life of others, his writings being the very emanations of a kind generous nature, he has succeeded in reaching the heart of the public. All men relish art and literature when they are free from pedantry. We are all pleased with pictures, and like to be charmed into thinking nobly and acting well by the delights of fancy.

In his personal appearance, frank, graceful manner, for-

tune, and mode of life, Mr. Longfellow reflects or anticipates the elegance of his writings. In a home surrounded by every refinement of art and cultivated intercourse, in the midst of his family and friends, the genial humorist enjoyed a retired leisure, from which many ripe fruits of literature could not fail to come forth.

In 1855, Longfellow published *The Song of Hiawatha.* It was an attempt to embalm in verse various shadowy fables and legends, which had from time to time been gathered by travellers and antiquarians from the lips of the Indians of North America. A wild fanciful air of poetry ran through these traditions which frequently displayed a pure and simple vein of feeling, linked with a sense of awe and wonder, in the contemplation of the powers of nature. They were, however, vague and remote from ordinary life, and the attempt to ingraft them upon American popular literature, by Mr. Schoolcraft and others, had met with but little success. They had ben occasionally introduced into poetry, but Indian poems had not proved favorites with the public, and they rested for the most part in their original prose settings. Longfellow cast a scholar's and a poet's eye upon them, and, doubtless, led by the example of the learned author of the « Kalevala » a collection of poems similarly built on the traditions of a mythical Finnish hero, selected the legends best adapted for his purpose, and choosing the Indian deity, Hiawatha, a species of Apollo, for the central personage, grouped about him various picturesque incidents of the manners and superstitions of the aborigines. The measure of the poem was as novel as its subject-matter, a trochaic octosyllabic stanza. At first, the public seemed disposed to resent the experiment. Overlooking the exceeding skilfulness and delicacy with which the author had conquered the difficulties of his almost impracticable material, the novel measure was censured, jeered, laughed at and parodied everywhere in the newspapers in ludicrous applications. The ridicule once soo freely heaped upon Wordsworth's Lyrical Ballads appeared to be revived,

to be poured upon the head of the devoted American author. The facile measure, the strangely sounding Indian names sprinkled over the work, with the general oddity of the whole thing, favored these sportive efforts. Some were even disposed to censure, as if some violent outrage had been committed on the English language and literature. But it was only for a few days that the witlings had their pleasant amusement to themselves. The judgment of the judicious crept in a full measure of praise was awarded for the art, the refinement and grace of the work, and what had been at first pronounced its absurdity became a new means of swelling the reputation of the poem. The parodies were multiplied on all hands, in newspapers, magazines in pamphlets and in volumes; the jingling trochaics got into the very advertisements and a tradesman's wares were hardly thought to be properly set before the public without an echo of « Hiawatha. » All this added to the social excitement, and edition after edition of the book was swept from the publisher's counter, which at the outset seemed to groan under the novel infliction. The verses were recited in public, by ladies, to admiring audiences. Hiawatha, in fact became established with every mark of favor. As soon as the battle of the critics became a matter of mere literary curiosity, it was admitted that Mr. Longfellow had rendered an important service to an interesting epoch of American hystory, happily preserving, in verse, the quaint fancies, the humors, the social and domestic traits, the simple affections and religious aspirations of a pathetic race.

Three years after the publication of « Hiawatha » Longfellow, in 1858, again made his appearance before the public with a new octavo containing a narrative poem. *The Courtship of Miles Standish.* Like *Evangeline*, it is written in the hexameter measure and like that poem derives its interest from its representation of long-past scenes of American history. The stalwart soldier who gives name to the poem, is brought before us in the midst of his old New England Indian battles

and early perils of settlement in the New World; but the main incident of the poem is of a gentler aspect in the wooing of Priscilla, the modest maiden of the Puritan time. The grim warrior intrusts his courtship to the more persuasive lips of a young friend, whose arguments faithfully delivered prove only how much more captivating an elegant youthful messenger may be on such an errand, than the veteran whose cause he is sent to plead. The old soldier, of course, entraps himself by this unhappy strategy, and, with a true soldier's magnanimity, gracefully yields to his fate. The poem has many pleasing passages of description and has secured its share of popularity, but it may be questioned whether on the whole, its hexameters have not been unfriendly to its reception.

As with the autor's previous poem, « Hiawatha » and « Miles Standish » have afforded favorite subjects for illustration to the artists. Elegant and costly editions of both have appeared in London, the former with a series of choice engravings from designs by George H. Thomas, the latter with a similar good service by the facile pencil of John Gilbert, who has been employed in the decoration of several other books of Longfellow.

In 1864, Longfellow published a new volume of poems, entitled, *Tales of a Wayside Inn.* Varied in subject, this volume connects the nature of the New World with the pathetic romances and Stirring Northern legends of the Old. The « Birds of Killingworth » is happy in conception and execution, and thoroughly American in its incidents. The tales of southern Europe are quaint and picturesque, with a moral supplying food for the heart as well as the fancy. The « Saga of King Olaf, » which fills a large part of the book is the story of a race matured amidst the grandeur of nature – men of strong passions, fierce loves, and quick resentments, walking hand in hand with destiny, familiar with magic and incantations, ruling as the winds and wave rule, despotically, with wild energy.

Besides these longer works, Longfellow was afterwards a frequent contributor to the *Atlantic Monthly* of occasional poems.

Flower de Luce the first poem in a volume of thirteen, gave the name to the next work issued by Longfellow, which appeared in 1866. These short companion pieces where independent of each other in thought, versification, and theme. To specify the favorites in such a collection would be to name them over, one and all: Palingenesis; The Bridge of Sighs; a loving tribute to Hawthorne; Christmas Bells; Kambalu; The Wind over the Chimney; The Bells of Lynn; Killed at the Ford; Giotto's Tower; To Morrow; and the sonnet entitled *Divina Commedia.*

In 1868, *The New England Tragedies* were published. were published. These two dramas recall the aspect and spirit of the old Puritan times, with the historic fidelity to life-like details so charming in the Story of Miles Standish; but unlike the latter, they embody mereley their ascetic intollerance and grim rigor. The tragedies are: « John Endicolt » a Tale of the Persecution of the Quakers 1665; and « Giles Corey of the Salem Farm, » a Tale of the Witchcraft Times, 1692. The prologue to the former contains perhaps one of the happiest of this poet's illustrative comparisons famous as his writings are for their apposite beauty; and that in the opening figure, which likens the ancient city to a half defaced manuscript covered with fresher writing.

« To night we strive to read, as we may best,
This city, like an ancient palimpsest!
And bring to light, upon the blotted page,
The mournful record of an earlier age,
That, pale and half effaced, lies hidden away
Beneath the fresher writing of to-day.
Rise, then, O buried city that hast been;
Rise up, rebuilded in the painted scene,
And let our curious eyes behold once more
The pointed gable and the pent-house door,
The meeting-house with leaden latticed panes,
The narrow thoroughfares, the crooked lanes. »

And in any question his motive in recalling the errors of a by-gone age the poet gives this answer:

« For the lesson that they teach;
The tolerance of opinion and of speech,
Hope, Faith, and Charity remain — these three;
And greatest of them all is charity.
Let us remember, if these words be true,
That unto all men charity is due;
Give what we ask, and pity, while we blame,
Lest we become co-partners in the shame,
Lest we condemn, and yet ourselves partake,
And persecute the dead for conscience sake. »

Longfellow made another visit to England in the spring of 1868 where he was welcomed with tokens of cordiality and respect. He received the onorary degree of LL. D., from the University of Cambridge, and that of D. C. L. at Oxford, while the Athenaeum Club invited him to dinner and the Reform Club of London admitted him to honorary membership — « a compliment rarely conferred by that somewhat aristocratic though liberal institution. » *

In 1867 appeared Longfellow's long expected translation of *The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri,* — Inferno, Purgatorio, and Paradiso, — in three stately royal octavo volumes. The success of this scholarly and faithful version was such that 7,500 copies of the first volume of this costly edition are stated to have been sold within six months after its publication. Two other editions, complete with all the notes and illustrations, were soon after issued: one in three duodecimos, and another in one compact volume. The notes, which are such a necessity for the clearness of

« This mediaeval miracle of song, »

whose every sentence is weighted with meaning, and the illustrations, which relate to the life, character and criticism

* American Literary Gazette xi, p. 141 and. xiii, 170.

of its « poet saturnine » omit nothing essential to its understanding.

« His translation is the most faithful version of Dante that has ever been made. He is himself too much a poet not to feel that, in one sense, it is impossible to translate a poem; but he is also too much a poet not to feel that sympathy with his author which enables him to transfuse as much as possible of the subtle spirit of poesy into a version, of which the first object was to be faithful to the author's meaning. His work is the work of a scholar who is also a poet. Desirous to give to the reader unacquainted with the Italian the means of knowing precisely *what* Dante wrote, he has followed the track of his master step by step, foot by foot, and has tried, so far as the genius of translation allowed, to show also *how* Dante wrote. The poem is still a poem in his version, and though destitute, by necessity of some of the most beautiful qualities of the original, it does not fail to charm with its rhythm, as well as to delight and instruct with its thought.

. . . . . In fine, Longfellow, in rendering the substance of Dante's poem, has succeded in giving also — so far as art and genius could give it — the spirit of Dante's Poetry. Fitted for the work as few men ever were, by gifts of nature, by sympathy, by an unrivalled faculty of poetic appreciation, and by long and thorough culture, he has brought his matured powers, in their full vigor, to its performance, and has produced an incomparable translation — a poem that will take rank among the great English poems. With the increase of general cultivation, his work will be more and more highly praised; and it runs no risk of being superseded or supplanted by any more successful achievement for which it must itself have prepared the way. It is a lasting addition to the choicest works of our Literature. » *

The Divine Tragedy came from the press in 1870. It is the life, or rather selected and leading passages of the life of Jesus of Nazareth, pictured as a dramatic poem: a poetic version of the chief events of the Gospel, arranged in order

---

* North American Review, July 1867.

of time. These incidents, although enriched by appropriate illustrations of Oriental life and customs, conform with scrupulous delicacy, as a whole and in their minor details, to the language of the sacred narratives. Perhaps in rare instances, a pious reader may question the propriety of the poem's action, and that only in the matter of omissions. The additions to some subordinate scenes serve to add to the reality and vigor of the common conception, and impress the teachings of Scripture with new power. This is the case in the idyl of the Marriage of Cana, as well as in the appearances of Mary Magdalen, Simon Magus, Manahem, the Essenian hermit, etc.

In the following year, Mr. Longfellow gave to the World *Christus : a Mistery.* This work grouped into a unity of art three dramatic poems hitherto detached. In their new order, these were; Part I., *The Divine Tragedy;* Part II., *The Golden Legend;* Part III., *The New England Tragedies.* These were linked together by several suggestive prologues and connecting interludes, while a finale was added to epitomize the teachings of the whole. In its entirety, the poem gave an outline of the Christian dispensation, with a glance at the perversions of its teachings in mediaeval and modern times. Thus the poet preaches his sermon of fait and life and love, and directs the mind and heart.

> « Unto the simple thought
> By the Great Master taught,
> And that remaineth still :
> Not he that repeateth the name,
> But he that does the will. »

Perhaps the most appreciative and elaborate article on Christus was written by a brother poet, Mr. Bayard Taylor. * In his judgment: —

« The publication of the « Divine Tragedy » marks the

---

* New York Weekly Tribune, December 27, 1871.

most important period of the life of its illustrious author and thus becomes an event of special significance in American Literature. The theme, so old and so often attempted, is in itself almost a challenge.....

« While each of the three parts has its own distinct character, and apparently its integral completeness of form, a knowledge of its relation to the larger conception is necessary to the true appreciation of many passages. The introduction of such scenes as the Miracle-Play or the Monastery-Cellar in the 'Golden Legend', the object of which was not clearly apparent at the time that work was published, is now explained and justified. Much that seemed isolated or fragmentary falls at once into a true place, and receives a new meaning as the member of a grander body, the proportions of which are now seen for the first time. Thus, the addition of the Apostles' Creed, as an epilogue to the 'Divine Tragedy' loses the theological or ecclesiastical character which it seemed to wear, and assumes a subtle relation to the leading idea, which the reader will interpret according to the spirit in which he apprehends that idea.

« 'Christus' in the 'Divine Tragedy', declares. His nature whenever He appears. He is the Healer and the Teacher, and His Divinity proclaims itself, from first to last, through His Humanity. The poet has manifested a higher art and achieved a higher success in forbearing, than any of his predecessors have done in daring. As no sect can specially claim, so none can reject, the Christ he has transferred from the Gospels. Wat Mr. Longfellow has *not* done in the work is even a more striking evidence of his genius than what he has done. »

Three books of Song appeared in 1872. Its first part — *Tales of Wayside Inn : The second Day,* — is similar in plan to the first series and loses nothing in spirit by the continuation. The old legend of the « Bell of Atri » with its teaching of Humanity towards a brute servitor, is told with pathos.

« The Cobbler of Hagenau » brings the merchandizing

Tetzel on the scene, to the utter disconfiture of that monkish dealer in souls. « The Legend Beautiful » and « Lady Wentworth » appear, while the Eastern tale of Kambalu, originally published in *Flower-de-Luce* is now skilfully woven into the context. *Judas Maccaboeus* forms the second book of this work, and is devoted to the fierce struggle of the Jews for the religious independence of their nation. Book third is entitled « A Handful of Translations » and contains spirited renderings from the Persian, French, German and Italian. *Aftermath*, a similar volume of minor poems, followed a year later.

The multiform issues of the works of this poet attest his great popularity. Besides the plain and illustrated editions of many individual poems, four editions of his complete *Poetical* Works appeared in as many years : four volumes, duodecimo, in 1866; one « Diamond, » 1867; one, octavo, 1868; one, « Red Line, » 1869. « A Household Edition » also appeared in the autumn of 1873. In 1866, a revised edition of his *Prose Works* was published in three volumes. Four years later appeared, from the press of Porter & Coates, Philadelphia a new and revised edition of *The Poets and Poetry of Europe;* with *Introductions and Biographical Notices.* The appendix to this comprehensive and standard work contained additional translations from the Icelandic, Danish, Swedish, German, Dutch, French, Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese languages.

Longfellow 's last works are : — *Hanging of the Crane,* published in 1874; and *The Mask of Pandora* which was issued on the following year.

Many of Longfellow's poems have been translated into Italian. Thus we have his *Evangeline* elegantly translated by Rotondi and Zanella; The Spanish Student, by Alessandro Bazzoni ; other poems by Messedaglia etc. of course these translations have concurred in rendering L's name more popular with us; but what still remains a monument throughout his production , is the wanderful translation of *Dante's Divine Comedy.* Many a great literary man undertook such a heavy

task; some of whom could not go through the entire work, some others surpassed the great obstacle; but none reached the pinnacle of success as Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, whose translation of the highest Italian Poet, is paramount under any and every respect. Undoubtedly Longfellow may be proclaimed the greatest American poet of the Nineteenth century. His departure from this earth (March, 24, 1882) was deeply mourned by all literary men of all the world, who had long since been accustomed to appreciate and admire his talents and extraordinary culture.

Longfellow's activity was almost unrivalled; every moment of his life he spent working intensely and constantly; there is neither lack nor depression in all his career, and till his last moments he worked hard; so that he even left a tragedy entitled « Michael-Angelo, » which he could not have the satisfaction of seeing published.

THE END.